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Contents

EDITORIAL PARAGRAPHS 709
EDITORIALS:
The Tragedy of Chicago 712
Light Is Too Dear 713
Profits in Blood 713
Celluloid Sin 714
CARTOON: "MAYBE I COULD LET YOU HAVE A CHICKEN FOR THAT POT LATER." By Edmund Duffy 715
BEER, BUMS, AND REPUBLICANS. By Mauritz A. Hallgren 716
SEATTLE'S JOBLESS ENTER POLITICS. By Robert C. Hill 718
HOW BRUNING WAS OVERTHROWN. By John Elliott 720
APOCALYPSE OF THE WORD. By William Troy 723
HAS THE CRISIS RUN ITS COURSE? By Ray Vance 724
IN THE DRIFTWAY. By the Drifter 727
CORRESPONDENCE 727
CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE 728
FINANCE: THE RAILROAD DEFICITS. By S. Palmer Harman 728
BOOKS AND DRAMA:
The Third Decade. By Horace Gregory 729
Portrait of a Paragon. By Benjamin Stolberg 729
A Bewildering Symposium. By Ernest Sutherland Bates 730
The Perversion of Democracy. By William Seagle 731
Another Soldier. By Edwin Seaver 732
The Robert Burns Legend. By Isidor Schneider 732
Shorter Notices 733
Drama: "Troilus and Cressida." By Joseph Wood Krutch 734

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THE LAUSANNE CONFERENCE opened well by taking the first obvious and necessary step—that of getting out of the way the debt payments due on July 15, including the German reparations payments of $35,000,000 and the smaller payments due from France and Italy to Great Britain. These payments were neither canceled nor, as in the Hoover moratorium, "postponed"; they were "reserved during the period of the conference." More important than this move was the categorical resolution adopted by the conference in favor of "a final and definite solution" of the whole reparations and debt question to be pursued "without delay or interruption." In addition to that, Great Britain has moved forward from the position of the Balfour note, favoring, in the words of Neville Chamberlain, "complete cancelation in common with all other parties to the conference." This means that the British, in the interest of world stability, are willing to cancel both their share of German reparations and the war debts of France and Italy to them, irrespective of whether or not we cancel the British debt to us. It is almost impossible, however, to imagine France taking a similar position. Probably the best that it is possible to hope for at Lausanne is that the French will accede to an extension of the moratorium on reparations for two or three years, reserving the right only to a reparations tax on the German railroads, and will make a flat, unequivocal statement promising to wipe out German reparations entirely or to reduce them to a fraction of their present amount as soon as the United States takes similar action on war debts. That would place the problem frankly and unmistakably on America's doorstep.

IT IS ENCOURAGING to learn that a large majority of the fifty-three leaders of finance and business who replied to the questionnaire sent out by the League of Nations Association were strongly insistent that no international economic conference would be of any real value that did not include in its agenda the questions of war debts, reparations, and tariffs—all of which were ruled out by Secretary Stimson from the conference proposal he recently "accepted." It is doubtful if so general an indorsement of American participation in an international discussion of war debts and tariffs could have been obtained even six months ago. True, the indorsement comes from bankers, heads of railroads and large industrial corporations, and a few academic economists, and not from any holders of political office; but the trend is significant and hopeful. Only a very few of the telegrams answering the questionnaire, however, raised the question whether, granting the desirability of settling the question of war debts and lowering tariffs, a general economic conference was the best method of securing that result. The method of general international conference has not been so speedy or so brilliantly successful otherwise as to warrant the surprisingly widespread faith still held in it. Whenever such conferences have really accomplished results, it has usually been because a private agreement was arrived at before the conference met.

THE HOUSE PASSED THE BONUS by a vote of 209 to 176; the Senate, with commendable promptness, defeated it by a vote of 62 to 18. Both these procedures were pretty near what everyone knew would happen, except possibly a few of the more optimistic members of the bonus army in Washington. In other words, the House passed the Patman bill appropriating $2,400,000,000 for the payment of veterans' adjusted-compensation certificates because it felt sure that the bill would fail in the upper house, or if by some wild chance the Senate passed it, it would be vetoed by the President. A thoroughly dishonest proceeding, in short, designed to get votes and to curry favor with those of the folks back home who have come all the way to Washington to get the money they think is due them. The veterans who remain—and there are a good many—might be interested to note the report issued by Senators Copeland, Wagner, and Walsh, giving their reasons for refusing to vote for the bonus bill. The report declares:

> The condition of the public Treasury and the serious menace to the credit of our nation make it impossible to act favorably on this measure without bringing financial ruin to the country. . . . That we shall need an unimpaired Treasury next winter no one can question. We propose that when the call comes for that last-ditch aid, the federal Treasury shall not fail the hungry, the suffering, and the destitute.

This is a sound reason for voting against the bonus, but it

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is not very cheering to an Administration pledged to oppose the dole.

WHEN THE BANK OF FRANCE on June 14 drew $55,000,000, the last of its dollar balances, out of the United States, the action was greeted with the most vigorous upward movement of the dollar that had occurred in several weeks, and expressions of satisfaction were voiced by New York bankers on the fact that the French drain had come to an end, because the bank had no more to withdraw. Nevertheless, the adherents of the gold standard had genuine reason to be proud. The United States in a period of less than ten months had successfully met gold withdrawals of more than $1,000,000,000, many times the greatest drain to which any country had ever been subjected in any comparable period. With that drain ended, our gold reserves, still in the neighborhood of $4,000,000,000, are more than adequate. And now that the Bank of France has removed all of its deposits (the gold not actually shipped out has been "earmarked" for French account), it is probably true that the stability of our gold standard has little more to fear through any apprehension about it in Europe. This does not mean, however, that we can afford to deal with the problem irresponsibly. Countries can go off the gold standard by other means than foreign withdrawals. If Congress continues to discuss absurd measures like the Goldsborough bill passed by the House, or needless and dangerous measures like the Glass bill reported out of committee in the Senate, it is bound soon or late to create enough apprehension among Americans themselves to lead to a wholesale drain on the gold supply and the hoarding of gold in deposit boxes.

IN GAINESVILLE, ALABAMA, the municipally owned ice plant is distributing free ice to the citizens of the town this summer. Taxes and collections have more than equaled expenses, and free ice is one of the joyful results. This little story is in sharp contrast to the recent defense, by the New York Telephone Company, of its charge of twenty-five cents a month to the users of "French" telephone instruments. The company declares that the new instruments are expensive to make and are a luxury anyway. But when questioned, Edward L. Blackman, special counsel for the company, admitted that the old type of desk phone is no longer being manufactured, so that in time every telephone user will presumably be compelled to pay twenty-five cents a month for a luxury which he cannot do without. "The company," Mr. Blackman said, has "no intention of submitting to a reduction of the twenty-five-cent charge unless there is an increase made in other rates. The company is willing to go along with the same rates, but it is not willing to reduce any rates at this time." To an ignorant bystander, who has heard somewhere that the price of copper, of which telephone wires are made, has dropped almost out of sight, that other raw materials are not far behind copper, that wages are down, that, in short, the expensive equipment and personnel which the telephone company always adduces for the computation of its rates are probably cheaper than they were, say, in October, 1929, it is very cheering to be reassured that the "company is willing to go along with the same rates," and that it proposes to levy a three-dollars-a-year charge—for an indefinite number of years—only on "luxuries."

CLASS PREJUDICE and race antagonism have united in the Harlan County trial. Two miners had previously been sentenced to life imprisonment, and on June 11 the first of the forty-one now up for trial was sent after the earlier victims. The new casualty in the struggle is Elzie Phillips, a Negro, who was the initial witness of the defense, testifying that he was not at the scene of the famous "battle of Evarts" when the shooting of Jim Daniels and three other company guards occurred, that he did not, as alleged, boast of murdering "the man who killed my buddy," and that he did not attend a secret union meeting the night before the Evarts affair. Phillips's testimony was corroborated by that of Mrs. John Singleton, who swore that she saw Phillips at his home at the approximate hour of the encounter. But because Mrs. Singleton's husband had been killed last year by a mine guard, her crucial testimony was thrown out as prejudiced. The statements of other witnesses who declared they also saw the Negro miner at his home during the time of the shooting had no effect. It is apparent that the prosecution's strategy was based on the belief that it would be easy to convict a Negro, and after his conviction, easier to follow, one by one, with the rest of the accused workers.

AT THE BEHEST OF THE ARMY, the Chilean Socialist regime under Colonel Marmaduke Grove, which displaced the Socialist regime under Carlos Dávila, has been replaced by Dávila once more. The new government promises "moderation," "due respect to the independence of courts of justice," and respect for and recognition of international obligations. However, Mr. Dávila is still planning a constitutional government "based on the Socialist organization of the state." That this is far from socialism, anyone who knows South America can readily see. But Mr. Dávila is a courageous and intelligent man, and it may be that his "constitutional principles," even though they are enforced by the army, will offer to an oppressed Chilean people some measure of relief from the cruel and bloody dictatorships which they have called government. The revolution in Chile, of course, is mainly economic in origin. Copper ingots exported in 1929 were valued at $105,488,000; in 1930 they had fallen to $53,658,000. Nitrates have followed copper, and have been affected not only by the general world crisis but by the manufacture of synthetic nitrogen fertilizers in Germany and the United States. The imposition by the United States of an import tax of four cents a pound on copper not only added to Chilean economic distress but augmented the already strong feeling against this country. So far the Chilean government, in whatever form, has insisted that foreign investments are safe. If there is, as many persons suspect, a measure of radical feeling among the masses of the people which will destroy the power of the army, the real test of Chile's socialism and of the response to it by the rest of the world will be made.

THE PRESS has recently carried an "exposure" of the nepotism practiced by Senators and Congressmen in appointing relatives, often their wives, as their private secretaries and clerks. This is a perennial happening. Were the trail followed farther it would be possible to present a long list of office-holders who have had their sons educated free of charge at West Point and Annapolis, and more distant relatives berthed in all sorts of odd jobs. Sometimes, we

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will admit, the arrangement by which a wife is her husband's secretary, or a son his father's, works extremely well and results in much efficiency. The worst phase of it is when the relative draws half the pay and does nothing while the real secretary gets the other half for long and laborious hours of labor. As a whole, however, no one can question that it would be vastly better for the morale of our public life if every Congressman and Senator were compelled to take an oath not to appoint any relatives or "in-laws" to any office whatever. Until then, or until there is a marked rise in the tone and standard of our public life, this bad custom will continue despite periodic exposures.

GLENN FRANK, president of the University of Wisconsin, has actually found it necessary to defend the good name of the university against a new crop of witch-burners who used the flying of a red flag for an hour over one of the college buildings by prankish undergraduates as proof that the institution had gone Communist. President Frank's baccalaureate sermon of last June is being used against him. In it he said that he was opposed to communism but added: "I am convinced that the American system of free capitalism and political liberty can answer communism, but it must do it in deeds not in words. For men cannot eat words! Men cannot wear words! Men cannot trust their old age to words!" That any academic head should have to defend himself, or his institution, for using words like these is an outrage. It would be ridiculous to do so were it not that there has arisen in Wisconsin a most dangerous reactionary in the person of an editor, John B. Chapple, who denounces people with whom he disagrees with the violence, the animosity, the bitterness which marked the years immediately after the war. As this editor has been nominated by the regular Republicans to oppose Senator Blaine for reelection, the fight is well on. He talks, of course, an entirely different language from that of Mr. Frank, who is steeped in the principles of true Americanism and is most admirably defending the right of his university to free speech and free thought.

GASTON B. MEANS, convicted of grand larceny for having taken $100,000 from Mrs. Edward B. McLean to restore the Lindbergh baby, has been sentenced to fifteen years in the penitentiary. This is the third time Mr. Means has been convicted of a crime, and the inside of a jail is by no means strange to him. Yet it is reported that he heard the judge's sentence with a "cherubic smile" on his face, as unconcerned as if he had been asked for a match instead of fifteen years of his natural life. The phenomenon that is Mr. Means, therefore, will very likely pass out of the picture for long enough for him to be forgotten. But his strange career will hardly be forgotten when stories of odd criminal behavior are told. He has spent the better part of his fifty-three years in "undercover work." He has been spy, confidential agent—actually in the service of the government—private detective; he has served a term in prison for bribery and has been tried for murder, though he was acquitted. One can only wonder that Mrs. McLean found it possible to pay over $100,000 on the word of a man whose word has so often been found worthless. Nor would Mr. Means be worth mention if he were not, somehow, in his complete and buoyant disregard of any possible stigma that might be attached to his way of life, rather typically American. He might, indeed, be set up as a terrible example of what American carelessness of law can lead to.

THE LOS ANGELES *RECORD* deserves the gratitude of the newspaper fraternity and of the public everywhere for a victory it has just won in a contempt-of-court case. During the Julian Oil Company scandals, the *Record,* outraged by the way the rascally Julian managers—leading citizens of Los Angeles—were escaping a just penalty for their conduct, demanded action and criticized judge and grand jury for their delay in administering justice. Those criticized found that they could get into action at once, and so they cited the publisher, H. B. Briggs; the editor, Gilbert Brown; and the managing editor, Rodney Brink. For two years these courageous journalists fought the case and have won two extremely important decisions from the Supreme Court of California—first, that no judge charged with prejudice may pass upon his own qualifications; and, second, that the particular judge affected was disqualified from trying his own case. With everything in readiness for the trial of the journalists before an independent tribunal, the Los Angeles Bar Association, which had been associated with the prosecution from the start, suddenly discovered that it was time to dismiss the whole procedure, because, first, "due to lapse of time the Julian Petroleum case is no longer of public interest" (!); second, because of the rise of radicalism in the community by reason of the depression, "no good would be served" by reminding the community of the unpunished perpetrators of the oil frauds; and, third, "all wholesome purposes . . . have been achieved." The *Editor and Publisher* adds to this a fourth reason: that the Bar Association, never having been sincere in its prosecution and using its power solely to silence a public-spirited editor, could not risk having these facts brought out in a just court.

A GROUP OF GERMAN and British scientists gathered on the Brocken in the month of June and attempted to determine, by scientific experiment, the truth of a magic formula. They read out of the "High German Black Book" the incantations for turning a goat into a man, faithfully performed the required operations, and when the goat insisted on remaining a goat, went home satisfied that they had established a truth! No better proof could have been offered of the complete disappearance of the Age of Faith. In the old days when the Brocken was crowded on Walpurgis Night with fays and witches, and goats were by fearful rites turned into men, it was not necessary to measure the result by the hard rule of empirical evidence. If a skeptical scientist in the sixteenth century could have been so bold as to find the goat had not become a man, the faith in the hearts of countless believers would have proved him conclusively to be wrong. And who shall say that they would not have been right? Magic is magic; science, when it is at its empirical best, is science. But science cannot disprove magic, any more than it can argue away true faith. The scientists who went the other day to the Brocken knew beforehand that they could not turn a goat into a man; the believers who went long ago knew beforehand that some power which they did not understand could. For them the miracle, since it took place in their minds, actually happened. It was the miracle of faith.

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The Tragedy of Chicago

MR. HOOVER was renominated at Chicago—but not by his party. Those that selected him to head the Republican campaign again were Cowardice, Hypocrisy, Sham, Deceit, and Falsehood. Others were there; these triumphed. Some of the very men who sang Mr. Hoover's praises are among those who dislike him most. They know that never has there been a Republican President so unpopular and so distrusted. They know that if they had not been bound by precedent and threatened by the Presidential lash, someone else would gladly and enthusiastically have been chosen. This is proved first by the attempt to get rid of the ridiculous Vice-President, which was so nearly successful, and second by the demonstrated fact that the discreditable prohibition straddle was "nailed into the party platform" only, as a correspondent of the New York *Times* put it, "by the postmasterships of the dry South." In other words, as so often before, the President, because of his appointive power, was able to dictate his renomination and also the plank which was bitterly opposed by a majority of the delegates not under Presidential control. Never in the history of the Republican Party has it sunk quite so low and never has it shown itself so destitute of principle. It went farther—it showed itself destitute of the fundamental moralities. The leaders vied with one another to impose a monstrous falsehood upon the American people.

For once the Republican Party got off to an extremely bad press. The disgraceful prohibition compromise was denounced by all the leading writers there. Some of the oldest Republican newspapers characterized it adequately, the New York *Evening Post* calling it "a moral failure." The *Herald Tribune* described it as "a wet-moist-dry plank" without a rival as an "indecisive and vague" compromise. The Chicago *Tribune* minced no words in dubbing it a "flagrant fraud." That old Republican war-horse, the Hartford *Courant,* described it as a "dud" and as placing the party in anything but "a respectable posture." There is not even agreement among those organs which swallowed the dose. Thus, the Boston *Herald* calls it "a long step away from prohibition," while the Philadelphia *Inquirer* thinks that this puts the whole issue up to the people, and the Kansas City *Star* thinks that the convention "took a reasonable middle ground between the views of the extreme wets and the extreme drys." You pay your money and you take your choice! One newspaper printed a picture of the delegates in the convention hall being given, out of pails with dippers, a liquid "which looked and tasted suspiciously like beer." Who could be there and deny the complete hypocrisy of this branch of the Anglo-Saxon race?

As for the platform and the "keynotes," according to these Mr. Hoover is the greatest genius of all times. He alone has kept the whole world from collapse; and he whom the leaders despise is portrayed as "wise, courageous, patient, understanding, resourceful . . . tireless in his efforts and unswervingly faithful to American principles and ideals." Forgotten, of course, are the full dinner pail, the two-car garage, the chicken in every pot, the promised abolition of poverty. Forgotten were all those incredible Presidential assertions that the depression was over, unemployment only seasonal, and prosperity just around the corner. With complete falsity every effort was made to saddle the responsibility for some of the ills from which we suffer, and for the unfavorable aspects of the present Congressional session, upon the Democrats. It was clearly explained by Keynoter Snell that they are a "mob of feuds and factions" and "have exhibited colossal incapacity, hopeless division and disintegration," which doubtless explains just why it is that the Democrats have voted every important measure for which Mr. Hoover has asked. The platform, too, charges the Democrats with instructing "the Federal Reserve Board and Secretary of the Treasury to attempt to manipulate commodity prices," and fails to add that this was done by a *five-to-one vote* in the House, 123 Republicans voting with 165 Democrats in favor of the proposal. But why go on?

The tragedy of it all is that barring the words of certain wet dissenters there was not a vestige of statesmanship, not a shred of courage, not a single constructive proposal in regard to the desperate situation in which the country finds itself. True, there are in the platform some expressions of regret, as well as the effort to place the blame elsewhere. But we submit that no intelligent foreigner, unaware of conditions in the United States, could possibly gather from the proceedings the gravity of the country's situation, the extent of the suffering—the fact that twelve millions of Americans are approaching starvation; that the "American system" of leaving the fate of these unfortunates to private charity has broken down; that our leading cities are approaching bankruptcy; that, above all, millions upon millions of Americans have lost all faith in their institutions and their leaders.

No, the trouble in Chicago was that the Republican Party went through the old motions and tried to act as if it were still in the first decade of this century. There was not a single Hoover banner in sight, and only one picture of our model President. But for the rest the entire effort was the old one of striving to claim credit for everything good in sight, and to pretend that the world is just as it has always been. The Republicans bewailed, it is true, the "breaking of party ties and party faith," both among Republicans and Democrats. But they could not see that what is wrong is that the whole party system as now managed is rotten. As for the plight of the world, such men as these do not know what is happening. Never was incapacity more clearly shown. Never a more barren result when it comes either to analyzing conditions or prescribing remedies. Were we among those who believe that there is no other way to a better world than through incapacity, disintegration, collapse, and chaos, we should be throwing up our hats over this spectacle in Chicago. But we belong to that section of the American people which places human values above all others. Therefore when we read of such really obscene proceedings as those in Chicago, we can think only of the starving millions of Americans and shudder at the tragedy of indifference, casualness, and total incompetence which in this hour could talk and think only of the drink question and nothing else.

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Light Is Too Dear

THE recent speech of Floyd L. Carlisle, chairman of the boards of the Consolidated Gas Company of New York and the Niagara Hudson Power Corporation, to the convention of the National Electric Light Association in Atlantic City had a fresh, new sound. Mr. Carlisle pointed out that management of the electric-light industries had not been conducted entirely without criticism, and told his confreres that it was up to them to mend their ways. "Under the guise of management and supervision contracts," Mr. Carlisle said, "efforts have been made here and there to charge the operating companies with unreasonable and improper costs." Mr. Carlisle did not add that these "unreasonable and improper costs" were finally paid by the consumer, as he might have done, but he did declare it the "duty of this association to stamp out such practices." The other important point raised somewhat unexpectedly by Mr. Carlisle was that of lobbying, and "education" carried on by the utilities companies:

> Any taint of propaganda, of lobbying, of trying to color facts or to influence anyone except with facts, is definitely, and I hope permanently, ended in this association. . . . I repeat that the purpose of this industry is the generation and sale of electricity at fair and reasonable prices and no other, and that any company violating that purpose should not be permitted to remain within this association.

These, of course, are large, handsome words, and they ought to bring cheer to the heart of every citizen tonight when he turns on the light. In spite of the aura of "service" and general helpfulness which has illuminated the electric-light industry and cognate industries, a number of persons, thanks to the effective research done by a few assiduous and earnest workers, have suspected that the light they burned cost more than it should. They read of the elaborate program of education conducted by the electric-light companies. This program tended to prove beyond the shadow of a doubt that private companies, operating for private profit, could produce and sell better and cheaper electric-light service than municipal or State-owned companies operating for expenses only. Any figures which were adduced to indicate the contrary were declared false, misleading, and probably the work of Bolshevik agents. Women's clubs, lecture bureaus, literary groups, college professors, Rotary clubs, church, lodge, and school organizations were utilized and paid by the light associations to carry on this propaganda. Any bright child in the third grade can stand up and say who ultimately reimbursed the light companies. It was, of course, the consumer. The cost of propaganda, according to Jack Levin in his admirable study "Power Ethics," which is based on the material gathered by the Federal Trade Commission, was all charged to operating expenses, and was inevitably included when rates were computed.

Mr. Levin quotes a number of incidents from the record which make clear the workings of the educational campaign. For example:

> There was a very prominent lady in the community . . . member of the Literary Club . . . of the W. C. T. U., and a number of organizations. She gave an afternoon tea, and in the course of the party . . . brought the conversation around to the subject of State water and power acts, and said rather casually, "My banker tells me that that is an iniquitous and dangerous measure," and with a little comment of that kind passed on. Those who were at the tea did not realize until the investigation came out that she had been paid (by the private utilities) . . . to buy cakes and cookies for the giving of that party.

The light companies made some attempt to conceal the true nature of this propaganda: "A $1,875 payment to a college professor and a $4,200 motion-picture bill for farmers are labeled on a voucher 'engineering investigation on wind and ice loading of transmission lines.'" If Mr. Carlisle, therefore, promises that there will be no more of this sort of thing, no more expensive lobbies, no more subsidized school teachers and engineers and leaders of the W. C. T. U., for the ultimate consumer to pay for while he is receiving the misinformation that municipal light plants are no good, the users of electric light and power ought to be grateful and even hopeful. It is true that thanks to the very propaganda which Mr. Carlisle decries, the public, with some exceptions, does not suspect that light rates are much higher than they might be under a different sort of management. There are grumblings at the size of the light bill, and these grumblings will increase when the new federal tax is added to it, but they do not get very far or carry much weight. We need education, right enough, but not of the old utilities sort; we need to know more widely that there are figures to show that public ownership of these utilities results in lowered cost to the consumer. But if the light companies no longer spend money on spreading misinformation, as Mr. Carlisle promises, and if that saving is reflected in a reduced rate for light and power, we shall have begun to bridge the gap between private and public ownership and control.

Profits in Blood

THIRTEEN years have elapsed since the League of Nations, through its Covenant, declared that "the manufacture by private enterprise of munitions and implements of war is open to grave objections," and charged the Council of the League with advising "how the evil effects attendant upon such manufacture can be prevented." The Temporary Mixed Commission in 1923, however, refused to urge the prohibition of private arms manufacture, asking merely that it be brought under control. That so unscrupulous an industry can be controlled only by outright abolition has been revealed by subsequent events.

During the World War British troops fell under the fire of enemy cannon made by British hands; Krupp guns blasted their way through the Belgian forts which were the creation of Krupp engineers; and all through the conflict an international powder cartel directed war supplies by devious channels into the hands of the larger belligerents on both sides. Today, on the very fields of Flanders where German shells rained destruction, Belgian farmers ride harvesters bearing the Krupp label in conspicuous letters. But this idyllic abatement of war-time passion hardly symbolizes a general conversion of swords into plowshares. The stranglehold of the arms rings on their dividends has not been broken, even though there have been shifts both in pur-

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chasers and profit-makers. Paul Faure, general secretary of the French Socialist Party, recently gave out sensational evidence in the Chamber of Deputies to support a charge that the Schneider arms factories at Creuzot have combined to sell munitions of war not only to France but also to fascist Hungary, and, less directly, to Czecho-Slovakia and other countries through the Skoda works at Pilsen. Eugène Schneider, according to M. Faure, is a director of the Banque de l'Union Parisienne, which finances the Banque Général de Crédit Hongrois, which in turn has financed the purchase of arms for Hungary. The same bank is stated to have founded the Union Européenne Industrielle et Financière, now in control of the Skoda plant, while the Schneider concern itself in recent years has delivered arms to Greece, Jugoslavia, Bulgaria, Rumania, Turkey, Russia, Spain, Italy, Argentina, and Mexico.

The British government, recently questioned in Parliament, admitted that British companies had sold arms alike to the Chinese and Japanese while their delegates at Geneva were ostensibly engaged in a heroic attempt to end hostilities in the East. Japan in six months received arms valued at £123,000, while China bought £31,000 worth in the same period. The names of the firms supplying these munitions were refused to members of Parliament by the Cabinet.

A report published by the League on June 15 shows that Great Britain led the world in the export of arms and ammunition during 1931. Its share was 30 per cent of the total; France's was 13 per cent; and that of the United States amounted to 12 per cent. In this country we have no delegations from anti-war societies in Congress with strength enough to force facts into the open, and our specific role in this trade has been substantially unknown. It is safe to say that the world-wide traffic will follow its traditional sinister ways until, as a minimum measure of control, the manufacture of arms is taken away from private and profit-making "internationalists" and placed under the ownership of governments, as Lloyd George promised during the war, where at least it can be subjected to a degree of world scrutiny and criticism.

Celluloid Sin

ADVERTISING men are, presumably, the men who know best what really interests the American people. Presumably, also, they are the ones who know best how this interest can profitably be appealed to; and, accordingly, we periodically examine their writings for the purpose of bringing ourselves a little closer to the heart of the people. Our deductions are not always too comforting, but we offer for serious consideration the following excerpts gleaned from the movie advertisements in one issue of a prominent trade paper:

"Bought on Time." A pent-house blonde who loved in instalments and wouldn't go off the gold standard.

"Havoc." Taunted by her smile—haunted by her kisses—men lied, stole, betrayed, and killed—in an unholy struggle for the soul of this woman.

"Rackety Rax!" Racketeers gone collegiate. Gun molls gone co-ed. Turning the campus into a hotspot of sexology, sockology, ginology, and jazzology.

"Born Wild." Untamed, unashamed, *free*—amid the shadows of grim buildings—catching sunshine in crowded parks—snatching kisses in dark hallways.

"Okay!" A merry kiss-and-run romance amid city lights and city sounds.

"Red Dancer." Glamorous foot-loose beauty seeking men and money in pent-house parties.

"Shanghai Madness." Shanghai—glamorous, perilous, treacherous—luring a beautiful girl to explore its evil heart and all but destroying her.

"Beautifully Trimmed." High-riding story of a blue-flame vamp whose red lips laughed at love.

"Hat-Check Girl." A miss who missed nothing—a new slant on the wise women of the White Way.

"The Sun Also Rises." The story of a woman who squandered love to ease her breaking heart.

"Prodigal Daughter." Dares to tell you what slumbers in the soul of a woman.

"Mazda Lane." The glitter—the glamor—the laughter—the tears of Broadway. Where girls with wishbones wear sables and girls with backbones wear rags!

Twelve pictures advertised in a single issue of a journal, every one of which assumes that sexual sins contribute the one really interesting subject in the world and each of which exhausts the vocabulary of the copywriter in an attempt to suggest that it is more raucous, more provocative, and more "daring" than any of its fellows. Twelve pictures every one of which may be, and every one of which probably is, tagged with a moral thrown as a sop to hypocrisy, but every one of which does, nevertheless, base the whole of its box-office appeal on the assumption that the potential audience will accept a half-reel of repentance in exchange for six reels of transgression.

What does it all mean? Does it mean that the public imagination is so thoroughly and so cheaply corrupt that even the wisdom and purity of Mr. Hays's august body has been unable to restrain it within these limits—whatever they are? Does it mean that a movie-making industry which could really give the public what it wanted would riot even more frankly in sentimental pornography? We doubt it. It means, we think, that the attempt to suppress anything as normal and as irresistible as the interest in sexual passion is inevitably to diffuse it, and that by keeping the movies pure—that is, by forbidding any frankly comic or frankly serious treatment of love in modern life—the reformers have produced an endless crop of leering, hypocritical, and dishonest dramas which perpetually suggest what they dare not say.

The theater, on the other hand, has gone its own way without any official censorship and with very little real interference. Yet the theater, however sex-obsessed some may feel it to be, has never in its worst season so tirelessly hammered away upon one theme. It uses titles which occasionally do not contain any reference to "passion," "kisses," "pent-houses," or "lips." It sometimes treats of themes which are not advertised as "daring," "glamorous," or "forbidden." Sometimes it even recognizes the fact that flaming youths, kept women, and all-but-seduced virgins are not the only interesting people in the world. Perhaps, therefore, if the movies had not been so pompously regulated they might not now be so preposterously lurid. Perhaps, in a word, if some movie stars occasionally fell, all of them would not be always on the brink, and perhaps nine out of ten heroines would not have to be, as they now are, frustrated nymphomaniacs restrained at the last minute by fear.

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"Maybe I could let you have a chicken for that pot later."

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Beer, Bums, and Republicans

By MAURITZ A. HALLGREN

Chicago, June 16

THE men and women who owe their political jobs to Herbert Hoover have renominated him for the Presidency. These district attorneys, federal marshals, revenue collectors, and other "representatives of the sovereign people" carried out their orders from Washington without a hitch. Not eagerly, of course, for most of them have little stomach for the man they believe will pull the Republican Party down to defeat in November—a defeat which will mean the loss of their jobs. Even the excited efforts of professional cheer-leaders and the several crudely manufactured "demonstrations" for Mr. Hoover could not conceal the apathy of the office-holders, their lack of enthusiasm for the man who temporarily is their boss. The delegates at the convention talked of rebelling over this or that minor issue. For a while the hotel lobbies were filled with rumors of revolt, but these rumors were taken seriously only by the White House. Reinforcements to keep the job-holders in line were rushed from Washington as the convention was opening; for some curious reason the White House appeared to be afraid that the repeal drive or the rebellion against Vice-President Curtis might result in a stampede against the President himself. Mr. Hoover's lieutenants in Chicago reflected his nervousness. They were needlessly alarmed. There never was the slightest danger that the delegates—the beneficiaries of the Presidential patronage machine—would deny Herber Hoover the nomination he wanted. Indeed, they denied him nothing.

It was on the whole an extremely polite convention. The majority dropped its demand for beer out of deference to the White House. The convention renominated Charles Curtis for the Vice-Presidency, largely because no one could think of a graceful excuse for turning him out of office. The delegates tactfully ignored the evidence of unemployment and poverty which surrounds the Chicago Stadium, where the convention was held; they apparently did not wish to see the hundreds of permanently unemployed men, the "bums" of West Madison Street, who lined the main approaches to the hall—people good enough to be members of "the only party fit to rule" are quite obviously above noticing the derelicts of a civilization that keeps faithful Republicans well fed and comfortably clothed. But the stage managers of the convention, Mr. Hoover's agents, were afraid for a while that the delegates were carrying their politeness too far. At the opening session the mention of Mr. Hoover's name was greeted with only perfunctory applause. This was remedied the second day by the importation of a professional cheer-leader from Alexandria, Virginia, who gained the floor of the convention by borrowing a badge from a Delaware delegate. But the managers did not depend upon his efforts alone. They resorted to other artifices—waved flags themselves whenever the enthusiasm of the delegates lagged, had toy balloons released at appropriate moments from nets hanging from the rafters of the hall, kept bands waiting in the wings ready to sweep out on to the floor as soon as Mr. Hoover was placed in nomination, and ordered the bands and the great pipe organ of the stadium to continue playing lest the shouting and hand-clapping die down prematurely and thus embarrass the President.

Yet the show was so artificially staged that even some of the conservative newspaper correspondents from Washington could readily detect the false note. Only three of the demonstrations, two of them directed against Mr. Hoover, were in any sense spontaneous. The galleries booed and jeered James R. Garfield when he spoke in defense of the platform plank on which the President will now attempt to straddle the prohibition issue. They howled with derision as the police, upon instructions from Senator Fess, were ejecting former Senator France of Maryland from the speakers' platform for having tried to place Calvin Coolidge in nomination. The third genuine demonstration was the work of Roscoe Conkling Simmons, Negro delegate from Chicago, who lifted a part of the audience to its feet with the only real oratory of the convention. Otherwise the meeting of the Republican marionettes was conducted entirely in accordance with the program sent from Washington.

"Keynote" speeches are inevitable. They are required by tradition and custom, so sacred to all conservatives. Moreover, the radio, providing as it does an unprecedented publicity channel, keeps the custom alive. It was left to Senator Dickinson of Iowa to sound the keynote of the 1932 convention. The Republican managers knew that they could depend upon Senator Dickinson to say the right thing in the right way—to extol the virtues of the protective tariff, denounce the Democrats, and attribute to President Hoover all the qualities ordinarily identified only with the gods of mythology. And the keynote speaker did so with great vigor. He even went so far as to give Mr. Hoover credit for some of the accomplishments of the Democrats in Congress—for example, the London naval treaty, the moratorium on war debts, and the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, among many other measures, Congressional approval of which was made possible only by Democratic votes. And these votes were obtained upon the distinct understanding that neither side was to seek to make political capital out of the passage of the several measures. For some reason or other the delegates did not respond to this laudatory speech. Perhaps they were already acquainted with most of its contents, for the address was merely a summary of the many publicity handouts that have in recent months come from the White House or the Republican National Committee headquarters in Washington. Again, the keynote speaker slid cautiously over the only controversial issue that really interested them—prohibition. In any event they revealed their indifference by engaging in private conversations throughout the long address. At one time their talking became so loud that it drowned out the amplifiers, and Senator Fess had to pound long and strenuously for order.

But the real keynote was sounded by National Chairman Fess himself. He opened the convention by reminding the delegates that June 14 was Flag Day. He rambled on about "the nimble fingers of Betsy Ross" and "the halls of Monte-

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zuma." He lovingly draped, figuratively speaking, the Stars and Stripes over all our national heroes, not, of course, forgetting Herbert Hoover. He received a brace of standards from an American Legion color guard, and called upon the audience to respond with the oath to the flag. Perhaps Simeon Fess was not conscious of the fact that he was thereby officially opening the campaign, and sounding the note which the campaign will most probably follow. The whole attitude of the convention was apologetic; every pro-Hoover speaker indicated by his gestures and the pitch of his voice that the Republicans will have to have something more than the President's record to offer the voters. And what could be better than patriotism and loyalty to the flag? The trick was tried in 1924. The Republican orators in that campaign largely ignored the Democratic candidate, John W. Davis, and concentrated their fire on Senator La Follette. The latter was damned as a radical and a red. His plan to reform Supreme Court procedure was roundly denounced as part of a conspiracy to undermine American institutions and wreck the American government. Today the danger of a red revolution, at least in the minds of the Republicans, is much greater. Are there not millions of men and women out of work? Was not West Madison Street in Chicago lined with enemies of our society, though we pretended not to see them? True, the government could help these unfortunates and so protect itself. But the Republican nominee considers such help un-American, and a peril no less real than that which may come out of the widespread privation and misery among the working people. The better way would be to appeal to the patriotism of the victims. And so during the next few months we shall very likely hear that every vote cast for Mr. Hoover is a vote for Old Glory and the security of the Republic, while the voters opposed to his candidacy must be considered unpatriotic and probably bolsheviks. We shall be told that a vote for the Democratic candidate, whoever he may be, is really a vote for Norman Thomas and Moscow. Indeed, the closing paragraph of the newly adopted platform declares: "The Republican Party faces the future unafraid. With courage and confidence in ultimate success we will strive against the forces that strike at our social and economic ideals, our political institutions."

But the Democrats will not have the pleasure of being entirely ignored. Virtually every speaker, and the platform as well, pointed out that in deciding between two evils the country ought in justice to itself to choose the lesser. The electorate may not consider the Hoover record satisfactory, but then they should remember that the Democratic record is much worse. According to the platform, "The vagaries of the present Democratic House of Representatives offer characteristic and appalling proof of the existing incapacity of that party for leadership in a national crisis. Individualism running amuck has displaced party discipline and has trampled underfoot party leadership. A bewildered electorate has viewed the spectacle with profound dismay and deep misgivings." Would a party that really had confidence in its own record emphasize with such extravagant and bitter language the supposed weaknesses of its opposition? It is noteworthy that the 1928 platform, far from attacking the Democrats, did not even mention them. In that campaign the Republicans were quite willing to let their chances of victory rest on their own achievements.

Future historians, if they have any sense of honest realism, will unquestionably put down the Republican convention of 1932 as the most revolting spectacle, from the standpoint of humanity and common decency, in the entire history of American party politics. It seems hardly necessary to repeat that we are today in the midst of a great economic crisis, that millions of our fellow-Americans are in want. Yet all that really interested the delegates to the Republican convention was beer. *The Nation* wants the Eighteenth Amendment repealed. I am personally opposed to prohibition, and always have been, not for economic reasons, but on moral grounds. But the sight of some hundreds of representative citizens, even of Republican office-holders, bawling for beer while all about them is misery in the extreme, has virtually crushed what little faith I have left in American society. The wet circus might have been at least partly excused had the convention in any substantial or intelligent way recognized the need for concerted social action to meet the unemployment problem. But there was no revolt against the beautifully meaningless phrases in the platform on this question. Not a single voice was raised in behalf of the hungry millions. It is possible that the Republican delegates had not previously come into direct contact with the problem. Perhaps in their comfortable homes in their own communities they had avoided sight of the working-class districts. But here in Chicago they were deprived of that excuse. By some strange fortune the convention hall stands in the very middle of one of Chicago's poorest districts. Running out in every direction from the stadium are streets—Warren, Madison, Monroe, Adams, Honore, Lincoln, Paulina, Marshfield—lined with the houses of unemployed workers. I walked up one street and down another for an entire afternoon and found hundreds upon hundreds of idle men and women. They were somewhat more "respectable" than the defeated, discarded men known to Chicago as "West Madison Street bums," but it can hardly be said that they were more hopeful or more comfortable. Where is the protection for these people which Senator Dickinson said every class would find in government by the Republican Party?

But the delegates were not alone to blame. Before the convention opened, every means of bringing pressure to bear on the delegations was used by the wets. They staged huge parades, held mass-meetings, thundered their demands over the radio. But were the unemployed or their representatives given a similar opportunity to be heard? Not for a moment. In fact, when they sought to organize a demonstration before the convention hall, the mounted police of a Democratic city administration rode them down. There is no doubt that the police will perform the same useful function when the Democrats gather here week after next.

In a sense the attitude of the Republican delegates is understandable. They had come to Chicago to undertake what was to them a disagreeable task. They were compelled to nominate a man for the Presidency who, in the opinion of a large majority of them, has not the slightest chance of reelection. And with his defeat they would lose their political jobs. Naturally they were in a mood for rebellion. But their revolutionary vision was bounded by the inside of an old-fashioned growler of beer. Beyond that they could see nothing. Therein without question lies the particular futility of the 1932 convention of the Republican Party.

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Seattle's Jobless Enter Politics

By ROBERT C. HILL

Seattle, June 13

"JOBS, not charity," is the keystone upon which the Unemployed Citizens League has erected a structure that promises to become an outstanding political power in the State of Washington. Its potential strength and the sincerity of its leaders in demanding economic reforms have projected it into the limelight. With their ears to the ground politicians are listening intently, prepared to board the bandwagon and support the league's program. The organization came into being in Seattle as the result of a spontaneous movement to provide work for the unemployed during the recent winter. While its efforts have since been forced into channels of emergency relief, its future is concerned principally with the enactment of legislation that will prevent a recurrence of the conditions which have compelled thousands of self-respecting and hard-working American citizens, now reduced to want and destitution, to accept public charity.

Unique in character, aggressive in leadership, successful in accomplishment, the Unemployed Citizens League occupies a distinctive place. It has molded a disorganized, almost desperate mass of humanity into a disciplined political entity. The plan is spreading over the State and locals are being formed in suburban centers as well as in the cities. It is at least possible, at the present rate of growth, that its membership may dictate at the coming election the personnel of the State government.

The political strength of the unemployed was manifested at Seattle's municipal election in March when the slate indorsed by the U. C. L. was triumphantly elected. This ticket included the mayor, three councilmen, two members of the school board, and the port commissioner. The new mayor, John F. Dore, a brilliant and successful lawyer with unique and liberal ideas, strongly appealed to the voters, especially those out of work. He was elected by the largest plurality in the history of the city. His platform included tax relief, particularly for the home-owner, drastic reduction in public expenses, abolishment of useless positions, increased public efficiency, reduction in public salaries including his own, jobs for the needy, and legislation that will correct current economic ills. This program harmonizes with that of the U. C. L. Mr. Dore is a newcomer in public office. He defeated Mayor Robert H. Harlin, union-labor man, who with two councilmen failed to understand the spirit of the unemployed's program and went down to ignominious defeat. Mr. Harlin's indorsement by organized labor failed to save him. The total city registration approximated 144,000, of which it is conservatively estimated the U. C. L. controls 50,000 votes. This is formidable political strength, and that it is recognized as such by public officials is shown by their changed attitude toward the unemployed. Hereafter the voice of the workless will command respectful attention.

For weeks during the early winter the council had discussed emergency relief work, but there was more talk than action. The city fathers evidently thought the U. C. L. was composed of unorganized and loud-mouthed agitators. But so emphatic was the popular expression at the recent election that reactionary councilmen have since seen the light. Shortly after the election the same city officials who had ignored the demands of the unemployed gave them the free use of the Civic Auditorium for a mass-meeting and in addition furnished free street-car transportation to league members. At this gathering, where 10,000 citizens met to air their grievances, former Mayor Harlin and a committee of councilmen were castigated in frank language for their alleged shortcomings in dealing with the situation. The distressed voters plainly told their officials they would tolerate no further juggling or sidestepping. Definite action, not honeyed promises, was demanded.

Since the public reprimand the council, responsive to the mighty political whip wielded by the U. C. L., has been active in its attention to unemployment problems. It has passed a resolution requesting the Governor to call a special session of the legislature for the purpose of providing relief and to outline plans for cooperation of the State with federal and local governments in a program of public works. It specifically demands that the legislature repeal an obnoxious State law which directs the sale of property on which local improvement assessments are delinquent for two years, without giving notice to the owner. In addition the council now favors federal appropriations for extensive construction to provide emergency work. Plans are also in the making for a municipal bond issue of $1,000,000 for city emergency work. As a measure of more immediate relief, the council has provided free garden seeds for the needy.

Employment, legislation, and relief, in the order named, are the objects of the U. C. L. Even should conditions improve so that emergency relief may be no longer imperative, there are earnest and sincere members who intend to perpetuate the organization in order to obtain legislation that will make it impossible for the conditions of the past winter to recur. The principle is laid down that in future the government must provide sufficient employment so that distress may be prevented. This will be the objective of the league's future course, although a definite program has not yet been adopted. Already the organization is working to obtain by the initiative an unemployment-insurance bill. A similar measure was presented to the legislature last year but received scant attention. League leaders believe they will obtain the 50,000 signatures necessary to place the proposal on the ballot next November.

The U. C. L. came into existence almost overnight late in the summer of 1931. The conditions that the unemployed faced during the winter were visualized by such leaders of progressive thought as Hulet M. Wells and Carl Brannin, the latter the head of the Seattle Labor College, and they are given credit for fathering this unique movement. District locals of the unemployed were then formed, the idea spreading rapidly until twenty-two locals were functioning, each equipped with a commissary. Each local elects five delegates to the central organization, which meets weekly. The

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president is John F. Cronin, a contractor out of work, and Charles W. Gilbreath, formerly in the trucking business, is general manager of relief. These men and many others have unselfishly given their entire time to the problems of the unemployed, serving without salary, and developing a high type of leadership in the face of the most discouraging conditions.

At this writing the Seattle league numbers 13,000 families, the total dependents being nearly 44,000. About 95 per cent of the membership is in family units, comparatively few single men being on the rolls. Recently nearly 5,000 veterans were added when the county funds for veteran relief were exhausted. The league is cooperating with public officials and welfare organizations in a program of continued relief, as it believes the situation will remain acute for an indefinite period. The original object of the organization was to provide employment. The thought of accepting charity was repugnant to the great majority of members. However, with the coming of cold weather, when conditions assumed a serious aspect, the major effort of the league was directed to the task of saving thousands of unfortunates from starvation and suffering.

> The great mass of our members [explained President Cronin] are hard-working, loyal American citizens. In our organization we require no certificate of character. Anyone in want is eligible. All are treated equally. Naturally there has been a great conflict of ideas. We have suffered from individualism. It has been hard to fuse divergent ideas and get mass action. The Communist element has been active but it has failed to dominate the league. It has taken strong and tactful leadership, not only in the central federation but in the locals, to accomplish what we have done in the face of constant dissension. But the morale of our people has been wonderful. To their credit, despite the stupid lack of consideration from some public officials—absolutely inexcusable—there have been no riotous public demonstrations, no conflict, no outbreak. They have remained law-abiding and orderly. We know that 95 per cent want to work and abhor charity. It is possible that 5 per cent are unworthy, satisfied to remain idle, subsisting on charity on the theory that the State owes them a living.

In response to the U. C. L. demand, presented early in the winter, for an appropriation of $1,000,000 to finance jobs for the needy, the Seattle City Council set aside an emergency fund of $462,000, in addition to $428,000 to be expended by the park board. Much political juggling followed, so that actually only $150,000 was spent for emergency employment and $10,000 of city funds for immediate relief. The work offered was under the Civil Service and therefore many of the most needy were barred. Applications for employment numbered 12,000. The council at first adopted a starvation scale of $1.50 a day on the theory that it would benefit a greater number. Loud protests followed. When the council finally adopted the city's minimum wage scale of $4.50 for emergency work, employment was suspended on the plea that the funds were exhausted. More considerate treatment was given by the county commissioners. This body was asked for $500,000 on the theory that the city would supply the balance. But the city failed to find the money, and since January 1 the county has financed all emergency relief by monthly appropriations.

Within a week after taking office Mayor Dore evidenced his interest in the problems of the unemployed by heading a new committee to handle the local situation. Mr. Dix, Mr. Cronin, and Mr. Gilbreath, ex-Mayor Harlin's committee, were reappointed. The new members, in addition to Mr. Dore, are Dr. W. C. Copps and M. A. Arnold, a banker. The Mayor has asked an emergency appropriation of $5,000 to enable the workless to pick strawberries which are wasting in the fields. It is planned to pack the fruit in barrels and store it in refrigerated space donated by the Port of Seattle.

The twenty-two locals of the U. C. L. maintain headquarters and hold meetings in halls and churches the use of which is donated. Putting into practice their principle of work rather than charity, members have given in labor and service the equivalent of thousands of dollars. Tons of potatoes, apples, and other products of the field and orchard have been gathered and hauled to the depots. Fishermen have donated their surplus. Shoemakers, barbers, tailors, and other craftsmen are earning their supplies by giving free service to the needy. This cooperative effort has extended to professional ranks—doctors, dentists, and lawyers giving generously of their skill and time. The sympathetic response of the public at large to the cry of the needy has been one of the bright spots of an otherwise distressing situation.

Fuel supplies were urgently needed last winter and wood-cutting furnished employment for nearly all the league members, the work being rotated. Within twenty miles of the city were numerous tracts of public and privately owned timberland where good wood was going to waste. With borrowed tools and donated trucks U. C. L. members produced 3,000 cords of stove wood a month, which was distributed through the locals. During most of the winter 19,000 otherwise unemployed men were at work cooperatively for the general welfare. Up to April 1 they had given more than 300,000 hours of labor, which, figured at the normal wage of 56 cents an hour, represents a total earning of nearly $200,000. Much suffering was thus alleviated. The ration list is based on a minimum of $2.50 in supplies per week for a family of four. No money is handled. Purchases are made in volume at the lowest wholesale prices. Distribution is made on proper requisition.

Only the direst necessity drove thousands of self-respecting, heretofore self-supporting American citizens into this cooperative movement for employment and relief. Practically all were home-owners. Lack of work, foreclosure of mortgages, excessive taxes, unwarranted improvement assessments, depreciation of property values, and failures of savings and loan associations created a burden that reduced them to the brink of starvation. Hunger broke their pride and forced them to ask assistance. Undoubtedly the white-collar class suffered most severely, for mechanics and laborers, accustomed to part-time idleness, were better prepared by experience to meet the problems of unemployment.

In a city that prides itself upon its advanced stand for public ownership, there was naturally widespread resentment because greater consideration was not shown to those unable to pay their water and light accounts. The league demanded credit for the needy, and now the city is extending more credit to those who are worthy, in many instances accepting the reports of the organization's investigators.

On May 30 U. C. L. groups from various sections of the State held a State convention at Tacoma and formed

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the United Producers League, which the agriculturists are asked to join. Since this gathering, efforts to form a coalition with the League for Independent Political Action have been initiated, the plan being to merge all progressive groups into a third party that will accomplish the aims of the workers and their associates. These include a three-year moratorium on rents, agitation against threats of war on Soviet Russia and against a levy for war purposes, a minimum wage of $5 a day, indorsement of the soldiers' bonus, and opposition to child and convict labor.

While numbering themselves among the unemployed, the officers and leaders of the U. C. L. never before were so busy as during the past winter and they are still fully occupied. To many the opportunity to help others has been a pleasure, causing them to forget their personal worries and troubles. "It is more blessed to give than to receive," has been proved by practical application. To the man walking the streets in despair looking for work, the chance to saw wood for the shivering or to drive a truck to deliver supplies to the needy has been one to be eagerly seized. The U. C. L. has been a practical and successful demonstration that in unity there is strength.

How Brüning Was Overthrown

By JOHN ELLIOTT

Berlin, June 4

THE "Cabinet of Barons" that rules Germany today is easily the most reactionary that the country has seen since the brief rule of Michaelis in the World War. The Papen Government is dominated by the militarists, the Junkers, and the industrialists. Its feudal nature is indicated by the presence in it of four barons, one count, two "vons," and just two untitled citizens. The declaration of policy issued by the government is written in the language of Hitler and Hugenberg. It denounces all preceding governments since the establishment of the republic for "having sought to convert the state into a charity institute."

The new government will undoubtedly try to undo the admirable system of unemployment and health insurance, and to abolish the arbitration agreements in industry which prevent wages from being cut by direct action of the employers. The Papen ministry, as one Berlin newspaper puts it, is trying to set the clock back to 1862 and to reestablish as far as domestic industry is concerned (needless to say, not fiscally) the laissez faire principles of the Manchester school. Politically, the consequences may be even more disastrous, and it is not too much to say that the existence of the German Republic established at Weimar in 1919 is imperiled in the year of Goethe's centenary. The first step has been taken toward setting up either a Hitler Government or, what will be more dangerous, a military dictatorship.

The coming of the Nazis into power was generally expected this year, but the rapidity and manner of Brüning's fall from office surprised everybody, except possibly the authors of the plot against him. Certainly Brüning himself was the most astonished of all at his overthrow. Up to the end he seemed to have no inkling of how his position with President Hindenburg had been undermined, and to have been completely unaware that the conspirators against him had not only picked his successor but filled out the entire list of the next Cabinet. The evening before his fatal Sunday interview with Hindenburg, he addressed the annual dinner of the Foreign Press Association in Berlin and in his last speech as Chancellor belittled "talk" about a Cabinet crisis, saying that he had more important things to think of.

It is curious that Brüning, by nature deeply pessimistic, should have been hopeful for perhaps the first and only time in his life when his doom was already sealed. Victory appeared to him to be within his grasp. In his last Reichstag speech on May 11 he spoke confidently of being "within a hundred meters of the tape." He believed he could get the creditor nations of Europe to agree to the definitive abolition of reparations payments—an achievement which in the minds of his countrymen would rank even higher than the securing of the freedom of the Rhineland by his great predecessor, Gustav Stresemann. The Chancellor felt that his position at home was secure at least until the autumn, and outwardly he had some reason to entertain such a notion. In its last session the Reichstag rejected by a majority of thirty votes the motion of non-confidence introduced against him, and so long as that parliament lasted—and its legal term did not expire until the autumn of 1934—the danger of being upset by the chamber seemed remote.

Not only had the Chancellor the support of the Reichstag, but he thought that he had what was far more important—the unshakable confidence of the German President. No single individual had contributed so much toward Hindenburg's reelection as Brüning by his stirring addresses throughout the Reich, in which he extolled the Field Marshal in glowing terms for his "good faith" and "loyalty." No Chancellor was ever so devoted to a chief of state as Brüning was to Hindenburg. Above the writing desk of the Catholic statesman hung the picture of the Protestant President. It was Hindenburg who, when the Cabinet of Hermann Müller fell in March, 1930, chose the then almost unknown Center Party Reichstag deputy to be the next Chancellor. And when the Reichstag refused Brüning its confidence that summer, Hindenburg stood by him, authorized him to dissolve the parliament, and signed all the necessary emergency decrees to keep the government running. So affectionate were the bonds that linked the two men that when Brüning undertook a trip through East Prussia in the winter of 1931, Hindenburg sent his own fur coat so that the Chancellor might keep warm while he was in the East.

Consequently Hindenburg's victory in the presidential election against Adolf Hitler this year was everywhere regarded as a triumph for Brüning. Even the Brown House in Munich never dreamed that Hindenburg would send to Coventry the man who had brought about his reelection, in order to instal in power the forces which had actively fought him in the campaign. But in his hour of triumph Brüning's position with the President was fatally compromised. His most deadly enemies were not the leaders of the parlia-

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mentary opposition, but men working underground and in secret—a clique of professional soldiers in the Reichswehr, men in the President's own household, and a group of Junkers, old friends and neighbors of Hindenburg's. What Hitler and Hugenberg failed to accomplish by frontal attacks, General Schleicher, Dr. Otto Meissner, and Elard Oldenburg-Januschau succeeded in doing by sapping.

The success of the intrigues against Brüning will be more readily understood if the circumstances under which he first took office in March, 1930, are recalled. He was appointed Chancellor by Hindenburg to create the first truly conservative government under the republic. The hold which the Socialists had had on the Reich for the greater part of the previous decade was to be broken. Brüning was intrusted with the task of forming a Cabinet resting on a coalition between the Catholic Center and the moderate conservative wing of the Nationalist Party, represented by men like Count Westarp and Treviranus. These calculations did not work out because both Hindenburg and Brüning had entirely misjudged the political situation. Alfred Hugenberg, the boss of the Nationalist Party, shattered this attempt to build a conservative government by turning it out in the Reichstag. In the historical Reichstag elections that followed on September 14, the moderate conservatives were virtually wiped out of political existence, while for the first time the National Socialist Party became a power to be reckoned with.

It will perhaps ever remain a moot question whether Brüning would not have followed the more statesmanlike course in taking the Nazis into the government that autumn. Very likely the responsibilities of governing would have sobered down Hitler's party and prevented it from waxing fat in two years of opposition during the worst economic storm that has ever struck Germany. But Brüning feared that the panic created abroad by the entrance of Hitlerites into the Cabinet would lead to wholesale withdrawals of foreign credits. He could not foresee the bank crash of July, 1931, which was to produce that disaster anyway. Furthermore, the duration of the crisis was thought at that time to be limited to the following winter and it was expected that an economic recovery in the spring would melt away the "crisis phenomenon" of Hitlerism.

By turning his back on Hitler in the autumn of 1930, Brüning was compelled to cooperate with the Socialists, whose help he had scornfully rejected the previous spring when the Reichstag dissolution could have been avoided. The Socialists had to make compromises as a result of their decision to "tolerate Brüning as the lesser evil," but so did the Chancellor, who needed their votes to preserve the façade of democracy. For Brüning was resolved not to govern by a dictatorship and therefore he needed Socialist support to get a majority for his decrees in the Reichstag. Consequently, the Chancellor, although profoundly conservative in his outlook on life, was pushed steadily to the left. The decision to dissolve the storm detachments of the Hitler movement, for instance, which led directly up to the Chancellor's downfall, was taken under strong pressure from the Socialist Party. But the growing dependence of the Chancellor on the Socialist Party became constantly more irksome to Hindenburg, whose prejudices against that party, rooted in his nature by ancestry, environment, and training, are ineradicable.

How far back the threads of the plot spun against Brüning extend is not generally known. Perhaps the plot began last autumn when Hitler was received several times at the Reichswehr Ministry by General Kurt von Schleicher, then secretary of state in that department. The existence of the backstairs intrigues against the Chancellor leaked out in public in January of this year, when Brüning was endeavoring to obtain the reelection of Hindenburg by parliamentary means through agreement with the Nationalist opposition. At that time strong pressure was brought to bear by a clique to get Brüning to resign on the ground that the Chancellor's tenure of office was the only obstacle in the way of Hindenburg's being reelected by acclamation. One of the principal figures in this intrigue was Dr. Otto Meissner, chief secretary to President Hindenburg. Originally a man of the left, Meissner, a career diplomat, was appointed to the office he now holds by the Socialist Friedrich Ebert, first President of the German Republic. Meissner, like Schacht, Gessler, and many other Germans in recent years, has swung over from liberalism to nationalism, and had become convinced that the Nazis had to be brought into the government. At that time, however, the intrigues against Brüning failed, as Hindenburg refused to accept any conditions as the price of his reelection and declined Brüning's repeated offers to resign.

General Schleicher is now the dominant figure in the Papen Cabinet. The present Reichswehr Minister is called the "office general" because most of his fighting has been done over a desk. He is perhaps the most adroit puller of wires behind the scenes since the late Baron von Holstein, who as a powerful minister in the Imperial Foreign Office probably was more responsible for the fall of the German Empire than any other one man. Just fifty years old and a native of Brandenburg on the Havel, General Schleicher embarked on a military career and was soon called to the General Staff. In the security of General Headquarters, far from the crashing shells, he passed through the entire four years of the war with the exception of the summer of 1917, when he was assigned to staff duty on the quiet Eastern front. He became the coworker of General Wilhelm Groener, whom he was later to overthrow in the closing stages of the war, won the favor of that excellent organizer, and in 1929 was given by Groener the post of secretary of state in the Reichswehr Ministry. This office was created for the first time for Schleicher and in fact, it is said, at his own suggestion.

Known to be an exceptionally able as well as an ambitious man, Schleicher even in those days is reported to have had his eyes on the job of the Reichswehr Minister. Never having had a military command, he could hope for no further promotion in the army. When Brüning intrusted Groener with the business of the Ministry of the Interior in reshuffling his Cabinet in October, 1931, Schleicher became the real boss in the Reichswehr Ministry. The first public intimation that there was a rift between the secretary of state and his superior came early this year when a decree was issued by the Reichswehr Ministry authorizing the enlistment of National Socialists in the German army. Previously Nazis, like Communists, had been barred from the army on the ground of being "hostile to the state." This edict created amazement as only shortly before both Brüning and Groener had publicly denounced the Nazis for their

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treasonable activities. The decree not only revealed the existence of divergent currents in the all-important Reichswehr Ministry, but for a time threatened to drive the Socialist Party into opposition to the government.

The Prussian Diet elections on April 24 sounded the knell of the Brüning Cabinet, although this was not generally appreciated at the time. It apparently convinced Hindenburg that the counsel of his unofficial advisers that the Nazis must participate in the government was correct and that Brüning's policy of shutting the door in Hitler's face was hopeless. The disintegration of the Brüning Government began when Hermann Warmbold, a director of the I. G. Farbenindustrie, resigned as Minister of Commerce early in May. Taken into the Cabinet only six months previously to win the support of the industrialists for the government, Warmbold soon fell into serious disagreement with his colleagues. His projects for a veiled and controlled inflation were shattered against the firm resistance of Brüning and the president of the Reichsbank, Dr. Luther, and his endeavors to effect sweeping reductions in the "doles" for the unemployed also proved fruitless against the opposition of the Minister of Labor, Adam Stegerwald, former secretary of the Catholic trade unions. Warmbold's retirement from the Brüning Cabinet was the signal that big business had declared war on the government. Now the dye-trust director has bobbed up again as head of the same ministry in the reactionary Papen Cabinet.

The act that probably decided the government's fate, however, was the decree banning Hitler's private army. This measure was pressed upon a rather reluctant Chancellor by Groener and the Socialists. It aroused the utmost opposition in military circles, where the Nazi storm troopers were regarded as a valuable adjunct to the small German army in that they kept alive the "martial spirit" of the country. The uprising of the "political generals" led by Schleicher made Groener's retention of the Reichswehr Ministry impossible. The political crisis was postponed by the Whitsuntide holidays, during which President Hindenburg retired to his country estate in Neudeck in East Prussia to ponder over the situation.

Hindenburg's departure was disastrous for Brüning. If the President had remained in Berlin the Chancellor might have been able to restore his dissipated authority. But in far-off East Prussia, with the Polish Corridor stretching between Neudeck and the German capital, Hindenburg was subject to a constant stream of advice from his Junker neighbors. The emergency decree which the Brüning Cabinet was drafting in those days was the last straw. It provided, among other things, that the estates of the big landowners which were heavily indebted should be broken up and sold at a fair price and then converted into small holdings.

The proposal to cut up the large estates of the class that had ruled Prussia since time immemorial brought all the Junkers up in arms. One of those who most influenced Hindenburg to oppose this measure was the picturesque octogenarian Prussian Tory, Oldenburg-Januschau, who years before the war made the famous remark that the Kaiser ought to be able at any time to send a lieutenant and ten soldiers to shut up the Reichstag. Another Junker who helped convince the President of the "bolshevistic nature" of the Brüning plan was Baron Wilhelm von Gayl, who today occupies the key position of Minister of the Interior.

The three dominant classes in pre-war Germany—the militarists, the Junkers, and the big industrialists—were now arrayed against Brüning. The unexampled speed with which the new Chancellor was named and the list of Cabinet members filled out indicates that the plot was well prepared in advance. The conspiracy against Brüning is said to have been concocted in detail at the highly aristocratic Gentlemen's Club in Berlin, an association of industrial magnates and big landowners.

Franz von Papen's selection as Chancellor does not argue much for the intelligence of the "political generals." With the exception of the ex-Kaiser, there is probably no other German who could so effectively revive war-time memories and prejudices in America and England against Germany as this one-time military attaché of the German Embassy in Washington whose espionage activities resulted in his ignominious deportation from the United States. As the London *Times* observed, Captain von Papen's labors in those years "are hardly a good recommendation to the goodwill of the leaders of those nations with which Germany must engage in delicate negotiations." Herr von Papen was chosen as Chancellor by the plotters to win over the Catholic Center Party, of which he was a member on the extreme right wing. But the effect on the Center Party was precisely the opposite of that which was intended. Had a Nationalist been chosen, the Centrists in accordance with their traditional policy would have given the new government "a chance" and so abstained from voting against it in the Reichstag. But the appointment of this Catholic "renegade," as the Centrists call Papen, was regarded by his own party as adding a gratuitous insult to the injury they had had to sustain through the humiliating downfall of their distinguished representative, Brüning. This clumsy maneuver drove the Centrists into an opposition as bitter and as angry as has not been manifested by this party since the days of the *Kulturkampf* with Bismarck.

The intentions of the Schleicher group are veiled in deepest secrecy and are viewed with the greatest anxiety by the republicans. The National Socialist press calls it a "transitional Cabinet" and says that its only task is to hold office until their party takes over the government after the election. But Schleicher himself is reliably credited with saying that his government is good for the next four years. It is also hardly likely that men like Baron von Neurath, the former German ambassador in London, would throw up their careers just for the sake of serving for a few months in a caretaker's government. Schleicher must have one of two plans in his mind. He may intend to form a pact with Hitler after the election and span the millions of that extremist party to the chariot of German militarism and junkerism, throwing a sop to Cerberus in the shape of a couple of ministerial posts and perhaps the Reichscommissarship of Prussia. This is based on the assumption that the Hitlerites and the Hugenberg Nationalists together will win a majority in the next Reichstag. More likely they will not. In that event, the Reichswehr Minister may figure on ruling by means of a military dictatorship based on the Reichswehr. In any case it behooves German republicans to watch the developments of the next months with the closest attention, for never has the Weimar democracy been in such danger as it is now.

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Apocalypse of the Word

By WILLIAM TROY

PERHAPS not until quite recently has it been possible to distinguish with adequate sharpness between what promise to be the principal directions of criticism in our time. But however confused that criticism may still remain to the cursory reader of reviews and articles, it is now almost certain that there are not more than three or at the most four clearly defined points of view open to the critic of today who would be both consistent and positive in his approach to literature. The time has come when the critic who refuses to identify himself with one or another of these points of view must seem either too superficial or too confused to be very much worth the trouble of reading. As for the critic who devotes himself to examining and dismissing the views of others without venturing to advance one of his own, the only position he can claim is the anomalous one of having no position at all, and his work suffers correspondingly in vigor and direction. Without pausing to consider the peculiar merits attached to such an Olympian attitude at the moment, one turns to the more boldly articulate groups who have aligned themselves under the more or less recognizable banners of classicism, romanticism, and communism. Of these groups certainly the most articulate so far has been the first; for the followers of T. S. Eliot in the *Criterion* in England and the *Hound and Horn* in America have had the very distinct advantage of working with a lucidly intellectual vocabulary. We have had, more recently, in the pages of the *Modern Quarterly*, the spirited correspondence between Henry Hazlitt and V. F. Calverton on the relations between communism and literature. But not until the publication a few months ago in Holland of the new enlarged *transition* have we had anything like so definite a statement of principles from what we may call the Romantic Survival in contemporary letters.

"The crisis through which we are passing today is primarily a crisis of human consciousness," announces Mr. Eugene Jolas, in the course of his counter-attack on what he believes to be the "gregarious hypnosis" of communism in the offing. The logic of the *transition* group may be summed up in somewhat the following manner: The world, as pretty well everyone agrees, is in a bad state of spiritual and intellectual disintegration. Everything has been affected, including our literature, which still persists in being written around the same ideas and in the same language as when the world and society were in a better way. The problem for literature in our time, therefore, is fundamentally a problem of words. "The vast political, philosophical, and psychological revolutions in recent history have shifted the significations of many terms to such an extent that the original ideas have become obscured, necessitating wearisome redefinitions to avoid the misunderstandings produced by the difference between the primary image and the superimposed one."

So far one may recognize much that is justified in *transition's* platform. But almost immediately Mr. Jolas is led to an apotheosis of the individual poet, to whom he would restore something very much like the vatic role the latter occupied in primitive society. Mr. Jolas places his faith in the poet, in the "orphic" vision of the poet, because he alone can give back to language its prelogical functions and thus make a spiritual revolt, "the only revolt worth making today." It is the business of the poet to undermine all rationalistic dogmas and ideas which stultify current literary expression by discovering in his own subconscious the elements of a new language. For this reason *transition* announces itself the champion of all hallucinative, mantic, and "mediumistic" experiments in writing. The current issue of the magazine has an ample representation of such experiments under the title "anamyths, psychographs, and other prose-texts." An "anamyth," we are informed, is "a fantastic narrative that reflects preconscious relationships"; a "psychograph" expresses hallucinations and phantoms.

It is unfortunate that the editorial plea of *transition* for a new and living language should be written in such a pretentiously vague and ultra-intellectual vocabulary. It is the more unfortunate because the effect is to discourage the few people who might be willing to admit the truth of some of its assumptions. Certainly no reader of contemporary writing can help agreeing, for example, that all but the best of it is written in a style that is rapidly losing whatever direct associations with the senses the language once possessed. Triteness, abstractness, weary journalese—almost any page by the late Lytton Strachey might serve as an example for study. Moreover, the cleansing process begun by Gertrude Stein as long ago as 1904 and carried on by Anderson and Hemingway has had but one result to date: it has set up a new euphuism as artificial as the old. The parodies of English prose styles in "Ulysses" have turned out to be only a prelude to the international dream language of "Work in Progress."

But admitting all this to be true, one is left with grave doubts as to the feasibility of any program which attempts to bring about a reform by deliberate and self-conscious means. Without reviewing the whole overworked question of "intelligibility" suggested by those few who have put the theories of *transition* in practice, one can question to what extent a language can be systematically created or reformed by any individual or group of individuals. There is certainly no precedent for any such effort in the history of languages in the past. New life is usually infused into a language by the necessity of a younger race to communicate new energies and a new response to experience, which was what happened in Europe after the collapse of Rome, and which is what may be happening in America today. The process is slow and extremely complicated (there is the whole science of philology); and a language is not fully revived as an instrument until it has been taken up by a first-rate literary genius. And a first-rate literary genius, in turn, is not born in every generation; he is the product of a culture which has settled itself into a complete social and intellectual unity. Language, in the last analysis, is not personal but social, whatever variations the individual may play on it.

This is, of course, at the same time the objection to the

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romantic assumption that a "revolution of the word" would entail a corresponding revolution in metaphysics, art, and religion. It is very much like believing that all the problems in the world would be solved by a new dictionary of Esperanto. We have seen in our time poetic imagery, extremely vivid and picturesque in itself, devoid of significance because it was insufficiently related to any cohesive background of ideas behind it. The narrowing of all our problems down to a problem of the individual word, as *transition* advocates, rather than leading to that integration which we would all welcome, leads on the contrary to an infinite process of fragmentation. In fact, the course of romanticism in the past few hundred years has been leading in exactly that direction.

For the truth is that the group associated with *transition*, whatever else we may make of it, does represent the most complete expression of romantic individualism, philosophical as well as literary, to be found in our time. If we consider romanticism to consist essentially in a process of reduction—from society to the individual, from the individual as a whole to the separate emotion, impression, and sensation—no other group has brought the process to a further point of culmination. We are here at length reduced to the lowest integer of conscious or subconscious communication. We are offered the Apocalypse of the Word. And in this ultimate simplification of the romantic gesture lies perhaps the real importance of *transition* in the scheme of contemporary letters: it does force us to make up our minds decisively whether or not we believe that gesture to be the appropriate one for our time.

Has the Crisis Run Its Course?*

By RAY VANCE

IT is particularly fitting to discuss the business cycle in connection with this depression because failure to provide against the dangers inherent in business cycles has been, in my personal opinion, the prime cause for the extraordinary length and violence of the depression. In the first place, all warnings issued during 1928 and 1929 were met with ridicule as the opinions of men clinging to an "exploded superstition." In the second place, the same men who refused to take precautions which might have prevented much of the damage are equally stubborn in refusing to recognize the signs that the crisis has about run its course and that what the patient needs is a period of natural convalescence rather than surgical operations on all parts which were ever diseased. These two statements are not based on any discounting of the importance of international debts, inflated bank loans, unwise speculation, or any of the other causes which are commonly given for the occurrence or for the long continuation of this depression. A combination of physical and financial conditions brought on the panic, and the wreckage of that combination must be cleared away before the state of business which we call prosperity can return. The point I wish to make is that the creation of that combination was the result of human activities, and that the creation of the *causes* was, in itself, the *effect* of a state of mind which considered the danger of another depression negligible *under the current business organization.* Furthermore, the failure to clear away the wreckage in a reasonable time is the direct effect of a widespread doubt that prosperity can ever return until the business organization has been fundamentally altered.

All of this is of practical importance because it goes exactly to the crucial point in judgment of any effort to cure this depression or to prevent another. Of course, it is hard to believe today that business will revive unless someone does "something drastic," but is it any harder than it was to see danger in 1928 or 1929? As a matter of fact, there is just as much nonsense being talked today about the impossibility of revival as was ever talked about the impossibility of a panic. The natural forces which will produce that revival are already at work, with the mass of our population cooperating as unconsciously through their daily acts as they cooperated unconsciously in the bringing on of the panic. Legislative or other conscious efforts must be approved when they help along the natural forces, condemned when they seek some miraculous or unsound way out.

Any attempt to give in the limited space of this article a detailed description of the developments which bring about the end of a depression would be ridiculous. However, we may divide them into two general groups which have a definite time sequence. During the first of these periods almost every business or financial indicator declines. All kinds of property, except cash, are pressed for sale at falling prices. Less of all types of goods, except raw food products and basic minerals, are produced than are consumed. Old debts are paid, or canceled through default, more rapidly than new ones are contracted. Working forces are decreased, salary and wage rates are reduced, and incomes from interest, dividends, rent, or professional services all decline. During this period living costs are lowered but purchasing power falls at least as fast, and fear induces a restriction rather than an increase in standards of living even for those whose incomes would permit an expansion or at least a maintenance of standards.

To a certain extent the change into the next phase is caused by sheer exhaustion of goods available for consumption, but a much more powerful factor is found in the fact that holders of cash begin to fear that never again will they be able to acquire so much property in exchange for their cash. As a result, purchases are made in excess of current supply and the business tide rises as inevitably as it declined. Four characteristics of these purchases tend to bring a turning-point in the business tide:

1. They do not arise from the fact that economies in production have reduced prices relatively below current incomes—every economy in production reduces someone's income by exactly the same amount.
2. They are made from accumulated cash which its owners may use at their own judgment.

* The tenth and last of a series of articles on national economic problems.—EDITOR THE NATION.

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3. They are not made merely because prices are lower than before but because the owners of cash fear future prices will be higher.

4. The motive for these purchases is the selfish one of getting the most for one's money rather than any altruistic one of "helping the situation."

In brief, the upswing after any period of depression starts with the reemployment of idle capital, and that reemployment occurs when the owners of capital believe that profits rather than losses will follow its use in place of its hoarding.

The interests of capital and labor are never identical, but in a situation like the present they happen to be practically concurrent. For most of us the depression will be over when we have steady jobs at living pay, or when the business activities in which we have invested our money begin to show profits. Profits for capital tend to return more slowly than employment for labor, but during the lagging period capitalists are gaining something, and are looking forward to still greater profits. For example, eighteen months after the bottom of the last great depression—1921—factory employment in the United States was more than 5 per cent *above* the peak of employment during the previous prosperity. By contrast, the year 1923, which opened with this new high level of factory employment, ended with eight out of ten outstanding manufacturing corporations showing profits which ranged from a fraction of 1 per cent to a full 55 per cent *below* the previous peak. However, no one of these corporations failed to show reasonable profits in 1923, and no one of them failed to reach a new peak of earnings before the next depression.

So long as a decline is still in progress, it remains hard to see that foundations for improvement are being laid, but some of the things which precede the end of a depression have already been accomplished. Among them are:

1. A liquidation of speculative positions in securities. With brokers' loans below $400,000,000 (a decrease of more than 95 per cent from the peak) we need worry no more about this factor.

2. Current debts have been sharply decreased. Total bank loans were off over 25 per cent by the end of 1931 and reporting member banks indicate a further decline to 33 per cent by May 1, 1932. Debts on open book accounts and instalment purchases are reduced even more sharply.

3. The supply of goods available for consumption has been sharply reduced. With wholesale prices for merchandise off 20 per cent, department-store stocks are off 35 per cent, indicating a physical-volume decrease of 19 per cent; and the supply of other unsold finished products has declined by almost exactly the same percentage. These are record-breaking figures, but the amount and condition of goods in the hands of consumers after two and one-half years of low buying is even more significant.

3. Wage rates and the general overhead of business concerns have been curtailed to a point where profits could be made on relatively small volumes of business.

At least three things, however, are not yet accomplished:

1. An adjustment between long-term, or "capital," debts and general price levels. In the rush to do this with intergovernmental debts, we overlook its impossibility for privately owned bonds and mortgages without wholesale bankruptcies. This will be an overhanging cloud until some inflation, or "reflation," has intervened.

2. With the exception of Great Britain no large nation has readjusted its budget to current conditions. To do this does not require an exact balancing of the budget but does require the drastic cutting of expenses built up through long years of free spending, the placing of heavy taxes, and the distribution of taxes over practically all classes and sections of the country. In spite of the tax bill just passed, I do not believe the real readjustment has been accomplished, or that it will be accomplished on the eve of an election, and I do not believe it will be accomplished except by bi-partisan action.

3. Owners of hoarded capital must be convinced that they face an opportunity for profit in its use. This cannot be accomplished until the other readjustments just outlined are clearly promised, and even then it will take more courageous leadership than is now in sight. However, there is little room for doubt that the leadership will be available as it always has been when conditions were right.

Business men and investors have been told that prosperity is just "around the corner" until the phrase has become a national joke. For that reason it seems worth while to consider first some of the factors of delay. Conditions for revival will probably not be right until after the election in November. Theoretically, this might be extended until the new terms of office begin in March or even later than that, when new legislation can be enacted. The effect of an election, however, reaches business confidence long before it affects actual governmental action. We cannot now forecast the election results, but we can assume that the country will vote for what it wants and will have confidence in the resulting government.

Other factors are not so definite. Intergovernmental debts might be settled at Lausanne this month, but more likely they must also wait for a time when a United States Administration with a fresh mandate from the voters can deal with the governments of Europe, which, fortunately, are of relatively recent selection. Some factors of inflation for commodity prices are already at work in Great Britain and some are being tried in the United States. So far those working in this country have had no effect except to slow up the decline in prices. Actual history of past panics shows that commodity prices usually do no better than that until months after the volume of business has increased, so this factor may be considered as already satisfactory. Summing up these indications and allowing for the fact that it usually takes longer for business to rise than to fall, "prosperity" in the sense of normal business is more than a year away. Even the beginning of the climb seems likely to be four to six months away unless something is done to hasten the progress.

A study of past depressions offers only four ways in which prosperity might be hastened:

1. International governmental debts might be canceled or definitely suspended. This would impose a long-term burden on creditors. Personally, I believe these debts are largely uncollectable, but it is doubtful whether that opinion will become sufficiently general in time to permit action which will affect this depression.

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2. International trade barriers might be lowered. This would be of little value unless by cooperation of practically all countries. Probably no action can be obtained for more than a year.

3. Any individual nation may hasten the process by a realistic readjustment of its budget. This is the opportunity which Congress has not adequately seized. As already explained, no elective body has ever had the courage to do a real job on the eve of an election. The individual voters may well do their part by disregarding party lines to bring in a stronger group of men at the next election, but there is small possibility that the present makeshift tax law or a few grudgingly enacted economies will have the desired effect.

4. A genuine inflation of currency, possibly even the suspension of the gold standard, would bring a quick response. Great Britain has already demonstrated this point. Its longer effect has always been seriously bad, and most economists will agree with the writer that impatience with the slow operation of the inflationary forces already at work is likely to produce transient benefit at the expense of trouble over a long period.

The emphasis I have laid upon natural rather than artificial means of ending a depression must not be construed as a condemnation of efforts to control the swings of the business cycle. The fact that periods of boom and depression are "natural" to business activity is no more reason for accepting them as right or inevitable than the fact that disease is natural to the human body is a reason for giving up preventive hygiene for the healthy or medical treatment for the sick. The fatal error in our treatment of business cycles has been that we have worked at it only after the damage has been done. The time to have prevented the current depression was between January 1, 1927, and January 1, 1929. During those two years business, banking, and political leadership had their final opportunity to provide against the natural reaction from a long period of business and speculative boom. A whole book has been printed ridiculing these leaders for their public statements during those years, but let us rather study their actual operations in fields where control might have been exercised.

The most natural place to expect leadership in cycle control is from the Federal Reserve System. The most noticeable failure of the leaders of that system occurred in 1927. During that year stock prices showed signs of inflation by soaring to new record heights, while business had difficulty in keeping pace, and private banks showed some conservatism by reducing their rediscounts with the Federal Reserve by $45,000,000, or nearly 7 per cent. In this situation the Federal Reserve contributed to further inflation by voluntarily adding $311,000,000—about 45 per cent—to its open-market purchases and by lowering its rediscount rates ½ of 1 per cent as an invitation to an increase of rediscounts. In the following year member banks took the cue so plainly given by the Federal Reserve. They increased their rediscounts by $474,000,000—81 per cent—and increased their loans to brokers by 42 per cent; and by so doing supported an inflation of stock prices which left common stocks yielding an average of 3.6 per cent from their dividends, while the money borrowed to carry them cost 7.4 per cent for time loans and 8.6 per cent for call loans. The Federal Reserve made a feeble attempt to check the tide by withdrawing $233,000,000 from the open market and by raising the rediscount rate of the New York bank to 5 per cent, but this had no real effect on the movement which the Federal Reserve authorities had done so much to start. The movement continued till the very breaking-point of the 1929 panic, but it is really the operations of 1927 and 1928 which represent the type of mistake which must be avoided if the business cycle is to be controlled.

The most important factor upon which "new era" disciples relied for cycle control was construction work, but the record here is little better than in banking. It seems reasonably clear that if construction work controlled by governments and large corporations is to be done in times of depression, it must be postponed in a period of boom activity in other lines. However, no such postponement was even considered. By 1925 construction work of the "controllable" type had reached a new high record, and 1926 showed a 26 per cent increase over that. Surely then, if ever, the time for "saving up" of desirable activity along this line had arrived. Instead, 1927 saw another 4 per cent added to the dizzy record of 1926, and 1928 piled still another 5 per cent increase on top of that. Public utilities and railroads responded gallantly in 1930 when President Hoover called on them to continue unnecessary construction work, but the really needed work of that year had been anticipated during the boom, and the unnecessary work brought disaster to the cooperating corporations and to government finance.

After covering these mistakes of banking and construction policy, it is pleasant to note one instance in which genuine provision for cycle control was made. When business reached normal in late 1922, the debt of the United States government stood at approximately $23,000,000,000. Tax rates were high and the demand for reduction was pressing. Two definite tax reductions were actually made, but the brightest spot in our provision for cycle control has to do with the handling of our federal debt. Every six months saw a net reduction in this debt, and so well was the situation handled that reduction continued until long after the panic had fallen upon business and finance. By December 31, 1930, the total was down to $16,000,000,000—a decline of $7,000,000,000, or over 30 per cent, in eight years. Up to June 1, 1932, the figure was still $4,000,000,000 under the 1922 total and $7,000,000,000 under the extreme peak debt of 1919. If the same wise policy prevails during our next prosperity, the recent increase in federal debt need not be of great moment.

Unfortunately, the record on State debts is not of that character, and the handling of municipal debts was one of the worst features of our failure to prepare for depression. Throughout the entire period of prosperity, municipal debts showed a consistent yearly increase, with the result that at the first sharp fall in tax yields a disconcerting percentage of our cities either defaulted or had difficulty in meeting their current bills. A curtailment of expenses in this field is even more pressingly necessary than in the federal budget, and a reduction of debt in the next period of prosperity is even more pressingly necessary than in the federal budget.

To sum up, this period of depression is drawing to a clase from natural causes and will probably show improvement before the end of this year without any legislative aids. Avoidance of another depression of such severity and length, however, is possible only if we are willing to begin our efforts at cycle control while prosperity is still with us.

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In the Driftway

A STRANGE phenomenon has developed in England, probably as an antidote to the depression. This is the mystery express. The Drifter may as well say frankly that he is not sure what the mystery express is, but from what he hears, it seems to be a week-end train which takes eager holiday seekers to a destination unknown to them when they start out. You board the mystery express at the end of the working week and it lands you, with your knapsack and your anticipations, in Upper Deeping or Throsset-on-Thyme or Bilswater, where you may thereupon spend a joyful Sunday hiking over the woods or beside the sea, as the case may be. The English railroad has always been something of a mystery to the Drifter. He admires it enormously, but he does not understand it. He reads every so often of the crack English fliers which burn up the track between Exeter and London or London and Manchester or some other point; these peerless trains are suddenly announced to have completed their usual run in two and a half minutes less than their former running time, or are triumphantly said to have attained an average speed, over the regular track, of eighty-five miles an hour, for seventy or eighty miles—eight or ten miles faster than the previous record. Now what the Drifter would like to know is how a regular train, making a regular run, can suddenly be permitted to reach its destination even two and a half minutes ahead of schedule. Is every other regular train routed out of the way as the flier tears along the track? One of the heroes of the Drifter's youth was the train dispatcher, who was described as knowing to a split second just where every train on the line must and should be. If the schedule was interrupted by ever so brief a time, there was the deuce to pay, and the dispatcher stood out in his true heroic colors by preventing wrecks and collisions in the twinkling of an eye. Is there no dispatcher on English lines? Do English trains run by competition only?

* * * * *

THE whole matter might be settled by having the fliers break the record on Sundays, when, loaded with holiday hikers, they started out on their dash for nobody knows where. If there did turn out to be an unfortunate accident, there would be just that many fewer hikers in the world. In his aversion to hikers the Drifter is joined by "Y. Y." in the London *New Statesman and Nation*. "I doubt," he writes, "if I should be happy . . . in the company of hundreds—perhaps thousands—of other people. . . . I should hate to be deposited . . . by a railway company almost anywhere with thousands of other people whom I did not know. . . . That is why I shrink from traveling in a mystery express with a train-load of hikers. I wish them well, but I could not go hiking with them after the sight of blue-bells or the sound of nightingales." The Drifter wishes them well, also, but he is not sorry that certain States have passed laws forbidding motorists to give rides to hitch-hikers. They no longer trouble his conscience on the comparatively few occasions when he rides past them; and when he walks, scorning to beg a ride, he is not sorry that they, too, must proceed afoot.

THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

The Massie Case

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: My attention was recently called to an article in the May 18 issue of *The Nation* regarding the Massie case, in which I am quoted as saying that the defendants were "illegally indicted, improperly tried, and never should have been convicted." I shall appreciate being advised on what authority you base this statement. I never gave out any such interview and never used any of those words.

Washington, June 8 HIRAM BINGHAM

[Owing to an error in transcribing, words quoted in the press as having been uttered by Senator McKellar of Tennessee were attributed to Senator Bingham. Senator Bingham was quoted as saying of the verdict in the Massie case: "I think they should have a full pardon. I am not clear what commutation under the Hawaiian law means. If, after serving an hour in jail, they are pardoned, then I am in favor of it." We deeply regret the error.—EDITOR THE NATION.]

A Word from Hawaii

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: As a citizen of Honolulu I wish to express my appreciation for the editorial comment on the Massie case in your issue of May 11. It is gratifying to know that some sanity is becoming articulate and that there seems to be evidence that the deluge of passion and hatred has spent itself. It has not been made clear just what Hearst, the navy, Congress, and God are going to do to us. We have, however, a vague feeling that they want to deprive us of our civil rights, and they may succeed. Some of us feel that if the navy wishes to maintain the respect of the civilian population, it would do well to drop Jones, Lord, and Massie from its personnel, as being temperamentally unfit to represent it. As for the esteemed members of Congress who wish to force upon us lynch law and make us like it, is it not possible they represent constituencies who think in terms of Stone Age simplicity and who have no conception of the intricate problem of administering justice in a complex and, let us hope, stable society?

Honolulu, Hawaii, May 25 RAY JEROME BAKER

Summer at Commonwealth

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: There is a need in the Middle West and Southwest for a place where workers, students, and professional people of the kind termed liberals and radicals can drop in for a few days or a few weeks during vacation time, assured of a chance to combine recreation and study in proportions of their own choosing.

Commonwealth College, the labor school in the Ozarks near Mena, Arkansas, will attempt to supply this need from June through September at a camp to be operated in connection with its summer session. An optional arrangement will permit the visitor to cut costs in half by helping fifteen hours a week with community chores—an idea borrowed from the Commonwealth College plan by which all students work for

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room and board. Under this plan, $25 a month will cover costs of meals, lodging, laundry service, and camp features.

Discussion circles, led by the college faculty, will be held on The Labor Movement Today, Looking Behind the News, and The Changing Thought of a Machine Age. Recreation includes swimming in the mountain creek, dances (modern and square), hiking, tennis, and a labor theater. Work, for those electing this activity, is likely to range from putting down sauerkraut to helping build a new dormitory.

The camp will not be operated for private profit and the proceeds will be used to help maintain the college.

HAROLD COY

Commonwealth College, Mena, Ark., June 2

For Engineers

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: The Society for Voluntary Technical Aid, organized to render voluntary technical help to the Soviet Union in its struggles for a socialized life and industry, and having as its ultimate purpose the fostering of socialized attitudes among American technicians, is issuing a call for members. All social-minded engineers who are willing to do work in aiding the Soviet Union to solve its technical problems please communicate at once with the Secretary, the Society for Voluntary Technical Aid, 26 West Eighteenth Street, New York City.

New York, May 28 PAUL CHUSID

Lafayette's Letters

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: I am preparing to publish the complete correspondence of General Lafayette. May I ask the use of your journal in order to appeal to owners of Lafayette material among your readers? No matter how slight their collections, if they will address me at the University of Chicago, I shall be profoundly grateful.

Chicago, Ill., June 16 LOUIS GOTTSCHALK

Contributors to This Issue

ROBERT C. HILL is a free-lance writer of Seattle, Washington.

JOHN ELLIOTT is the Berlin correspondent of the New York *Herald Tribune*.

WILLIAM TROY is a member of the English department of Washington Square College, New York University.

RAY VANCE, president of the Brookmire Economic Service from 1916 to 1926, is the author of "Business and Investment Forecasting."

HORACE GREGORY is the author of a book of verse, "Chelsea Rooming House."

BENJAMIN STOLBERG is a writer on educational and other subjects for current periodicals.

ERNEST SUTHERLAND BATES is the author of "This Land of Liberty" and "The Friend of Jesus."

WILLIAM SEAGLE is an assistant editor of the "Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences."

EDWIN SEAVER is the author of a novel, "The Company."

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER is the author of "The Temptation of Anthony."

Finance

The Railroad Deficits

RAILROAD shares have on the average lost 60 per cent of their market value since the beginning of 1932; compared with a year ago the decline has amounted to 81 per cent. While the carrier bonds have, on the whole, suffered a far less drastic slump, yet even these obligations, taking the best with the worst, are selling at little more than fifty cents on the dollar. Market values such as these give graphic expression to the widely held belief that the railway system of the United States is facing the possibility of wholesale receiverships.

That danger of widespread insolvencies exists is no mere general deduction from deflated security prices. Its concrete reality is demonstrated by operating and earnings statistics. During April the Class I carriers reported gross earnings of $268,000,000, or three-fourths of the April gross in the depressed year 1931, while net operating income, out of which interest and other charges are paid, amounted to $20,600,000, which was little more than half of the income of the corresponding month a year ago. At this rate, the Class I carriers need a 15 per cent increase in gross revenues in order to cover their aggregate fixed charges. The Standard Statistics Company notes that seventy-four Class I roads operated at a loss in the first four months of this year.

It cannot be said that the railroads have supinely watched their gross income dwindle without doing anything to check the ruinous reduction in net. Employees have been laid off wholesale, service has been curtailed, and numerous economies have been instituted. The railroads, however, because of the comparatively rigid nature of their physical structure and their business, are peculiarly in need of a full volume of traffic in order to operate with high efficiency. They have laid the ax ruthlessly to their maintenance expenses in order to bring their costs within bounds. During the first four months of this year thirty leading systems spent $108,600,000 less on maintenance than in the same months of 1931. Compared with 1930 the reduction in this item was $203,700,000; Atchison and Union Pacific spent 46 per cent less, New York Central 42 per cent, Northern Pacific 38 per cent, and so on at rates ranging up to 56 per cent for Illinois Central. Assuming that the maintenance expenditures of 1930 were somewhere in the neighborhood of normal, it seems obvious that the reductions since that time must have involved a serious lowering of physical efficiency. A revival of traffic would quickly bring this condition to light.

It is not a revival of traffic, however, but the continuing absence of it, that constitutes the real danger. With earnings definitely below the level at which charges can be covered, and with the opportunity for further savings greatly narrowed, it is obvious that a larger volume of business is essential if the roads are to work out of their difficulties in normal course. The alternatives are the taking over of the business by the government, which already has a large stake in it through the Reconstruction Finance Corporation loans; or further economies which will be increasingly difficult to effect; or the revamping of capital structures.

It is still the fashion to blame the Interstate Commerce Commission for the plight of the roads. No official voice save that of the commission, however, has enunciated a clear plan of railway regulation based on a rational idea; certainly the railroads themselves have not. They have been notoriously non-cooperative; and that is a fatal defect in dealing with a problem which is essentially the same for all of them.

S. PALMER HARMAN

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Books and Drama

The Third Decade

By HORACE GREGORY

It is the misfortune of men to use words
that tell nothing, to die with frozen
gestures on their lips, to feel the April winds
of death under their eyelids and say merely
Goodby, goodby.

(And was this creature murdered or did it fall,
a tower of tissue and bone in senile sunlight
with the years of its life scattered
among ruins of city streets swept into perishable
monuments
by midnight? What was the sex? Do not
disturb it.
The sex was an old coat worn on holidays
for picnics in the park or a chemise
draping the chandelier on New Year's Eve.
Are these bullets in its back or self-inflicted
wounds,
pitiful scars where the hand of Socrates
drew forth the entrails and the blood of Christ
swelled rivers into vales at Eastertide?)

Exit. Revolving doors wheel open
green valleys underground, close watery blue mountains in
the sky:
do not run, walk, slide
(even the flexible limbs are stone)
down marble to the sea—
What did they say, after long years of peace and after longer
but indecisive war?
The words are echoes and the veins empty their refuse to
the ocean's floor.

Portrait of a Paragon

Owen D. Young: A New Type of Industrial Leader. By Ida M. Tarbell. The Macmillan Company. $3.

CURIOUSLY enough the life of an authentically great man is much easier to gauge than the life of an ordinary man. It seems to me that even a hack could not help feeling, no matter how dimly, the living connection between Jefferson and the eighteenth-century enlightenment under the specific conditions of a pioneer culture; between Goethe and the Faustian tragedy of the romantic movement; between Trotzky and the coup d'etat which changed a world. The connection is no doubt hard to dissect. But at least it is easy to find. The great man expresses dramatically the inner strains of a culture. The struggle between his character and his career is significantly part of his age. His personality leads to a better knowledge of his society. But the portrait of an ordinary man is far more difficult business. The ordinary man seems almost entirely a thing of environment. His personality is neutral and vague. His uniqueness is protectively colored by the social chemistry of his generation. His spirit is unexciting except to his mother or a great artist. The biographer of common folks must have a wide and sensitive knowledge of the forces which molded them. That is why the great novelists, who are essentially the biographers of ordinary people, are culturally so deeply aware. Even fools cannot hurt Lincoln. But it took Flaubert to do justice to Madame Bovary.

Even more difficult than the biography of the average man is the biography of the exalted average man, of the man who is temporarily important and mighty beyond his endowment, the conformist who rose on some social escalator. Each generation has hundreds of such eminent nonentities. They make up the common garden variety of presidents and premiers, parliamentary chieftains, big financiers, managers, labor leaders, academicians whose information passeth their understanding, renowned journalists of the status quo, famous clowns and tragedians, and what not. Our generation, when genius can be ordered from press agents, has literally thousands of such publicity-blown celebrities. Some are perfectly good men, rendered spurious only by their unnatural distinction. Such meretricious genius flourishes especially in days of deep social confusion, when a culture is darkened by a vague sense of anxiety, when it is too bewildered for revolutionary clarity, too apathetic to apply the radical flit for the big bugs. In such periods society is afraid of its gifts. Unctuous conformity, perfect philistinism, glorified commonplace, the short shrewdness of competent surface men, here and there a morbid egotist, rise to the top. That is just what we mean when we complain, throughout our Western world, that "we lack leadership."

It is almost impossible for the biographer of the exalted average man to do him justice. Nothing short of a contemporary history will explain him. It is cruel to take him out of his social context even for a moment, for without it he is lost and ridiculous. The spotlight of eminence lessens the ordinary man into a little man. But above all the biographer must beware, in all fairness, of doing him the irreparable hurt of endowing him with the genius he lacks. That is why all "success" stories are really an outrage on the spirit of man. For the ordinary man in the unwitting guise of a great man becomes a literal spiritual caricature. His life is turned into a naive satire upon himself, his career into a Roman holiday for cynics. Miss Tarbell's life of Owen D. Young is the acme of such unconscious cruelty. I have seldom read a funnier tale than her admittedly "authorized biography" of her beloved victim. Her Alger hero gets an honorary doctorate from a great university, and so she seriously discusses the depth of his scholarship, proving it with fatal irrelevance by a long bibliography worked out by a hired librarian. Her hero sits on innumerable international and national commissions, whose technical problems Miss Tarbell never even mentions, and that makes him a philosopher-king of Platonic proportions. Mr. Young has enormous economic powers, which automatically make him a distinguished economist. In his commencement addresses he blithely and dangerously confuses the higher learning with training for "good citizenship," and Miss Tarbell spends a chapter singing his praises as an "educator."

Possibly, great universities endoctor Mr. Young and his kind not for their learning but for other and somewhat more ulterior reasons. Perhaps his power as an Elder Statesman and economic oligarch is merely a reflection of what is wrong with us. Perhaps his addiction to rare and uncut editions is more fashionable than learned. But to the "authorized" biographer the epigone *must* be not merely successful but truly creative. For the real library of such a biographer is the epigone's secretariat, which supplies the embossed literature of his rise. The biographer's check list is the epigone's friends and admirers. Thus an able business man is raised into an economic statesman and the statesman is somehow endowed with immortality. The damage is done. A man who might be

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fun for a week-end is raised into a modern Socrates. His most banal observations are paraded as verities. His ordinary decencies are sanctified into an ethic. When he says "Hello, John" to an old schoolmate he is amazingly simple at heart. His love of his mother, his natural affection for his childhood surroundings, his somewhat adolescent tie with some undistinguished Alma Mater are sublimated into a splendid and ineffable loyalty.

Mr. Young begins, after Miss Tarbell has found his ancestry to be properly sturdy and poor, on page 5 as a really nice kid. To lovers of children and youth his early pictures should prove really adorable. At the age of thirteen he is as cute as hell. But as Miss Tarbell takes him through college he becomes a little absurd. He is too good to be true. After college the absurdity grows. He became a lawyer to do good. He went into business to do good. He rose to power to do good. Washington would not stoop to lie, according to Weems, to get out of trouble. But Owen D. Young, according to Miss Tarbell, never had to tell the truth, for he never did anything wrong. Toward the middle of the book he becomes pitiful. At the end he is monstrous. Miss Tarbell tried to make him a great man. She made him a paragon, a man whose human dignity has been rendered insipid.

Mr. Young is well known. He speaks in releases. His thoughts seem to come to him in the form of newspaper columns. He is one of our national ideographs. The social observer knows a good deal about him. One need not be invidious to deny him even a touch of greatness. Mr. Young is no doubt an able man, for his own ends. He is an able negotiator, not in social politics, but in private business. He has the knack of making much money, a knack whose psychology we need analyze no deeper than the mere statement that it bespeaks nothing beyond itself. It would be silly to claim that he knows the theory of money, or any other field of economics, as well as scores of economists one might name. His "covering report" on "Recent Economic Changes" blissfully drew just the opposite conclusions from those the volume intended. Mr. Young's published addresses on international and domestic topics show quite clearly that his life has been extraordinarily busy elsewhere than in the field of social theory and politics. He no doubt had a good deal to do with the Young Plan. It is dead.

Miss Tarbell insists that Mr. Young is a statesman in labor. That can be settled very easily. Labor does not think so. Even the most reactionary labor leaders can hardly consider the most distinguished proponent of the company union their best friend. Mr. Young's main social efforts so far have been for the private ownership of the national power resources. In this field his social vision has been very clear and fairly astute, though he has advertised it very modestly.

Then just why is Mr. Young such a really important man? Has he something which greater men lack? Does he have some inner mechanism to adjust his temper into mastery over our present society, even though this mastery be nothing more than the addition of distinguished confusion to the general chaos? The answer, it seems to me, is that our big business men, who control so irrelevantly and incompetently so much of our culture, are the epigones, the bureaucratic successors, of the really great men, such as the elder Rockefeller and Morgan, who laid the foundations of this financial and industrial empire. To Miss Tarbell the leaders of the industrial North from the Civil War until after the turn of the century were plain crooks and nasty old men. Their successors today are, to her, almost saints. And she likes Mr. Young best because he is, temperamentally, the most perfect of the epigones. But epigones cannot be great. They are little men in great power. Through all history they have shown the same traits. They have a certain calmness of strength, a certain thickness of mind; their selfishness is more unctuous than morbid; they may honestly identify their social astigmatism with the general welfare; they are elastic only in their capacity to interpret the copybook maxims in their own way. They are not to blame. They are the spoiled children of an age. From a biographer they deserve the courtesy of being put against their social background. And they should be spared the outrage of being caricatured into gods.

BENJAMIN STOLBERG

A Bewildering Symposium

America as Americans See It. Edited by Fred J. Ringel. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.75.

"AMERICA as Americans See It" is a peculiarly apt title for a volume whose value lies almost entirely in its 140 illustrations. To mention the names of all the artists represented would be virtually to call the roll of the leading American contributors to every branch of the pictorial arts. One finds examples of the work of George Bellows, John Marin, Max Weber, Rockwell Kent, Thomas Benton, Walt Kuhn; industrial paintings by Georgia O'Keeffe, Charles Demuth, Ernest Fiene, Louis Lozowick, the late Preston Dickinson; landscapes by Edward Hopper, Charles Burchfield, Marguerite Zorach; drawings by Soglow, Peter Arno, John Held, Jr., Hugo Gellert, William Gropper. The new art of photography is represented by Marguerite Bourke-White, Edward Steichen, Ralph Sterner, Lewis Hine; there are stage settings by Robert Edmond Jones, Norman-Bel Geddes, and Lee Simonson; there are well-chosen comic strips and cartoons. Even the most cursory examination will reveal the virility and variety of our modernistic art, and the thoroughness with which it has set itself to portray our contemporary life. If there is little that is peculiarly American in its combined emphasis on realism in subject matter and careful design in treatment or in its growing tendency toward satire, nevertheless, in its union of beauty and intelligence—international qualities—American art, like American literature, is now for the first time able to hold up its head with European rivals. If "America as Americans See It" had confined itself to its illustrations, with half a dozen critical chapters on American art of the caliber of the one by Holger Cahill actually included, it would have been possible to give the volume unstinted praise.

Unfortunately, much more was attempted, and much less was accomplished. In his Foreword, the editor, Fred J. Ringel, a German, announces that the book is designed for the enlightenment of European readers—to give them a true picture of American life at the present time. Forty American writers were called in as contributors, and at first glance the list is only a little less impressive than the list of American artists. Sherwood Anderson, Upton Sinclair, Jim Tully, Arthur Garfield Hays, Clarence Cook Little, W. E. B. Du Bois, James Weldon Johnson, Stuart Chase, R. E. Sherwood, R. L. Duffus, John R. Tunis, Gilbert Seldes, Malcolm Cowley, Robert Benchley—surely such men as these are qualified to speak for us. Yet, as every reviewer has pointed out, the result is not enlightenment but bewilderment.

For this the very nature of the symposium is in part responsible. At best, a symposium is a many-headed beast. For this reason it requires unusually careful editing, a selection of authors who shall represent something like a unified point of view with sufficient space allotted each to permit him to develop his article properly, and, above all, a careful choice of significant and sequential topics. Mr. Ringel has fulfilled none of these duties. He has allowed his authors of real distinction to be submerged in a Sargasso Sea of weedy colleagues. Even where his authors are comparable to his artists their work compares unfavorably, because where the illustrations, fre-

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quently embodying the labor of weeks and months, are complete units, the articles, often less than two thousand words in length and the fruit of a few hours' effort, remain usually mere undeveloped fragments. Finally, the only principle of selection adopted by Mr. Ringel was to exclude the most important topics. For various unsatisfactory reasons given by the author, there are no articles on politics, religion, or prohibition. Aside from a brief account of The Younger Writers, there is no discussion of literature. The foreign reader will gain no inkling of the fact that in America industry and politics are indissolubly united, or that for a generation America has been engaged in the most serious kind of self-criticism through a literature both distinguished and national. The significance of the current depression, the notable leftward swing among authors, critics, and magazines, the fact that the whole structure of American society is today recognizably on trial, all pass without the slightest attention. Instead, we are told of how people get into the "Social Register," of how Graham McNamee loves being a radio announcer, of how (heaven shield the next French visitor) Park Avenue resembles the Champs Elysées!

Frankly, if the purchaser reads more than a baker's dozen of the articles, he will be wasting his time. But if he confines his attention to the illustrations, he will be amply rewarded for such abstinence. ERNEST SUTHERLAND BATES

The Perversion of Democracy

Government by Judiciary. By Louis B. Boudin. William Godwin. Two volumes. $10.

DESPITE its length, this book is intended neither as a history of the Supreme Court of the United States nor as a study of all the manifestations of the judicial power. To be sure, many of these are considered incidentally, but the primary purpose of Mr. Boudin is to consider the historical foundations and the judicial theory upon which the very existence of the power of the courts to review and nullify legislative acts has been based. The "official theory" is that the power was put into the Constitution by the Fathers, and first invoked and declared to the world by John Marshall. Mr. Boudin insists that both these assumptions are wrong. When John Marshall spoke, he uttered merely a dictum, since the question was not directly involved in the famous case of Marbury against Madison.

Of the many attacks upon the judicial power, Mr. Boudin's is undoubtedly the most elaborate and impressive. The logical absurdities of constitutionality are almost exhaustively explored. The historical evidence against the existence of the judicial power to review legislative acts has been thoroughly investigated, and the work must thus remain a much-needed corrective to the evasions and misconceptions of the official school. Mr. Boudin is rightly uncompromising at a time when liberals are inclined to thwack each other on the back in congratulation upon the dawn of a "new" day in the Supreme Court. One of his most brilliant chapters is the demonstration of the logical absurdity of the rule of reasonable doubt championed by liberals. It simply gives aid and comfort to the reactionary point of view. It makes it impossible to criticize even five-to-four decisions unless, indeed, it is assumed that liberals alone have a monopoly of reasonableness. Nevertheless, as is so often the case, the very virtues of Mr. Boudin also prove to be his chief defects. He sometimes either overlooks or refuses candidly to admit the occasional difficulties of his own position. His insistence upon logic leads him to overlook the considerations of policy which are at the basis of logical inconsistencies. He succumbs to the very legalism which he theoretically deplores, and at least in his method courts comparison with his *bête noir,* Mr. Charles Warren, the historian and almost official apologist of the Supreme Court.

Thus Mr. Boudin puts undue emphasis upon the importance of showing that the intentions of the Fathers have been set at nought. The question of legitimacy may be important to the security of a monarch's throne, but it is not vital to the continuance of a doctrinal error. If the judicial review of legislative policy were not a vicious but a socially useful mechanism, its historical dubiety would be no great objection to it. But as a matter of fact the proof of usurpation is not overwhelmingly convincing. "Intent" is a very tricky word. Mr. Boudin argues that if the Fathers had intended to confer the disputed power they would have been explicit about it, since the matter was of such enormous importance. It must be remembered, however, that this importance is obvious only to the present generation. The Fathers were probably rather muddled about the whole business. They left a large number of questions open, either because they did not realize that they would arise, or for the reason that they thought it best to avoid committing themselves too explicitly upon highly explosive issues. Apparently the Fathers did "intend," as Mr. Boudin admits, that the judicial department, like the executive and legislative departments, should have the power to pass upon questions of constitutionality in the course of the exercise of its duties, without, however, being able to bind the other departments by its decisions. But once this is admitted, the present system becomes inevitable. For ultimately the enforcement of legislative and executive acts must be had through the courts, and if the different departments of the government become involved in conflict, a state of continuous chaos must result. Moreover, Mr. Boudin's distinction is one that has been admitted by the Supreme Court. It would not be contempt of court for a district attorney to continue to attempt enforcement of a statute which had been declared unconstitutional. It is only practical considerations that intervene. This *reductio ad absurdum* shows clearly enough that the only tenable position is that the courts cannot be conceded to have power to pass upon constitutional questions for any purpose, a position, however, that cannot be reconciled with all the views of the patristic period. The net result of Mr. Boudin's attack from the historical side is actually to weaken his own position.

Mr. Boudin's excursion into punctilious legalism seems particularly puzzling when it is remembered that he is also the author of a book that is one of the best available expositions of the system of Karl Marx. It is apparently not his purpose simply to analyze the power of judicial review as an interesting example of the political means. He seems to believe that if a return to first principles can be accomplished, the rule of the people will be inaugurated in the United States. Apparently only the Supreme Court stands between the people and their chosen servants. The members of Congress and the President presumably fall over each other in their haste to aid the masses. Mr. Boudin constantly speaks of "government by judiciary," but, however baneful it is, it is an exaggeration to say that we are ruled by judges. It would be far more accurate to say that we are ruled by Wall Street. After all, if the Supreme Court is a political means for maintaining the status quo, it is not the only one. The difficulty of amending the American Constitution is probably as great an obstacle as the power of judicial review itself. If this latter were abolished tomorrow, it is very much to be doubted that undiluted democracy would at once become the order of the day. After all, many capitalistic countries seem to have got along without a Supreme Court to pass upon legislative acts. In all countries the judiciary exercises an undue power in the state simply as a result of the ordinary powers of judicial interpretation. It should be difficult for a Marxian to believe that the Supreme Court is any more than a scapegoat for the conservative system. WILLIAM SEAGLE

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Another Soldier

Czardas. By Jenö Heltai. Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.50.

"IN the thirty-fourth month of the war Peter Karmel, engineer in civil life and flying-captain in the army, definitely said goodby to the front and the spaces of the air above the battlefields which the good God had created for the use of airplanes and their pilots." Karmel emerges from an encounter with the enemy minus an arm and plus a constant buzzing in his head "like an ant-hill gone mad." He has paid his debts, as his jovial colonel tells him, to his conscience, his country, his king, the German Emperor, and the Sultan of Turkey. Karmel had not realized that he owed so many debts, but in the haunted days following his return to Budapest he finds that there are still many more to pay. "Yes, everything had to be settled," he realizes then, "debts of the soul no less than those of the body." "This was what he must do if he wanted to obtain peace of mind. He must make good his faults—not only those with which his conscience reproached him, but also those which slept in the depths of the subconscious, covered with an embellishing veneer and to some extent preserved by extenuating circumstances."

In the nightmares of his delirium while in the hospital Karmel has two recurrent visions: that of a blind man forever tap-tapping with an iron-shod cane, and that of a porcelain dancer ineffably lovely and tender. "Czardas" is the record of his search for the reality behind these two visions, a search into the hidden places of the heart. The quest plays back and forth over the dimension of time like a searchlight, placing now this episode in sharp relief, now that, and making of the whole a psychological pattern of rare subtlety and insight.

"Czardas" takes its name from a Magyar dance in which a group of mixed dancers, moving to the beat of a disturbing rhythm, rise to a height of furious passion. Heltai's novel adheres to the general form of the dance with gratifying success. With a simplicity of style, a lucidity of language beautifully rendered in the English translation, and an astonishing virtuosity, the plot winds sinuously through alternate zones of heat and cold, light and shadow, to a denouement implicit in the opening measures.

Heltai is director of the Theatre de Belvaros, and indeed in its more obvious moments his novel has a good deal of the theatrical about it. But it is always good theater, and one would hardly wish to use the term derogatorily where so much excellent rhetoric is involved. For its formal virtues alone "Czardas" must be ranked as one of the most distinguished novels to come out of the war.

EDWIN SEAVER

The Robert Burns Legend

The Letters of Robert Burns. Edited by J. DeLancey Ferguson. Two volumes. Oxford University Press. $10.

The Life of Robert Burns. By Franklin Snyder. The Macmillan Company. $4.

MR. FERGUSON has done his work so completely and so well that it is unlikely that the Burns myth will survive it. The dissipation of that persistent mirage is in fact its principal achievement. A credible man emerges, stumbling through credible tragedy. But I do not believe that many will agree with Mr. Ferguson that literature in the absolute sense is much enriched by the restoration. The letters will always be of value as a long and useful footnote to the poems; but the conditions under which Burns wrote them were anything but favorable to good writing.

Burns has suffered more even than Poe from sympathizers who libeled him with apologies. Currie, the first collector of his letters and his first biographer, was excellently, though unconsciously, fitted to become his Judas. Prudish and above all timid, his only bravery was a fanatic's belligerency toward alcohol. The supermoral Currie created the immoral Burns; the teetotaler created the drunkard. Having fixed the tradition, he left it to be continued by a willing posterity. It served Carlyle for a display of morbid rhetoric; Stevenson's essay, announced as a vindication, was actually one more betrayal.

The Burns tradition, so solidly fixed, was merely the world's tradition of the poet in a Scottish setting. This tradition has been the unsigned collaborator in most of the biographies of poets. According to its specifications the poet is irresponsible and an excessive imbiber of life. The excess, through sufferings that are viewed as the processes of a spiritual chemistry, precipitates into poetry. This view, pleasant to some literary men because it lights over them vicarious aureoles of martyrdom, is equally pleasing to solid citizens, to whom it gives excuses to take the poetry sanctimoniously rather than seriously, and not to take the poet seriously at all.

Consequently Burns, as the poet-sinner of tradition, was accepted with the blandest disregard of the realities. These, indeed, had not to be searched for but merely to be ignored. What are the realities? They come forth easily from the letters without the help of footnotes or interpretations. First of all, that Burns was not a drunkard: the letters have neither of the two moods that would have attested the drunkard—neither defiance nor repentance. It is now known that many of the commentators who said "alas" over Burns drank deeper than their Yorick. Secondly, Burns was not a philanderer. His were the pardonable raptures of earnest love; the sacrament of matrimony suffered chiefly from postponement—though once the postponement proved tragic. Burns sought desperately to marry the women he loved; and he did, after all, marry Jean Armour, after insulting rejections by her parents and after an interval occupied with the bearing of two bastard pairs of twins. Thirdly, far from being irresponsible, Burns had a scrupulous sense of responsibility that unsettled his life. Not dissipation but duty brought Burns to an early grave. Even a pillar of society would admit that the Burns conscience was satisfactorily sensitive and the Burns will obedient. At the cost of freedom and leisure he struggled not merely to support but to provide well for his many children, and again and again he came to the aid of his brothers contending with the poverty of a Scottish farm. At the height of his fame his ambition was not for a greater literary triumph in London, but for a modest secure income. No poet was less enamored of the role of the beggar minstrel. He feared poverty as only the son of a striving and starving poor man may. It had frightened his childhood; and he had seen his father broken by it. Moreover, there was the matter of climate. It might be easy to be poor in the warmth and abundance of southern Spain, musical with its singing beggars; but it was hard to be poor in cold and barren Scotland.

This fear of poverty was one of the elements of the psychological strain that kept Burns taut and self-conscious in his letters and allowed him to express only a social minimum of his personality. Another important element was his peasant awe of the gentry. He had no illusions about their human rating. But rank at that period had not yet encountered the pragmatic criticisms of the French Revolution. Burns might write wistful democratic poems, but his head bowed by reflex action to the important fact of aristocracy. Besides, bowing was practical. A civil-service appointment might be the afterthought of a gentleman's condescension.

Not only the pride of rank but its manners made difficulties for Burns. When he was on exhibition in Edinburgh drawing-rooms he strove, both out of courtesy and pride, to be

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a well-conducted specimen—more than a peasant bard, an evolving gentleman. Obediently he sought to evolve in the image of the social divinities who created him for the "world." Unfortunately, the "world" was sweating to fit itself into still another image, the maudlin paragon who sighed through the drooping pages of Mackenzie's "Man of Feeling." This mawkish Presbyterian substitute for Rousseau's natural man was its generation's superman. Since the letters became, for Burns, drawing-rooms on paper, we see with horrible clarity the agony of writhing and contortion that he experienced. Classical allusions grimace strenuously like the goddesses of tableaux; there are verse quotations, homages to "the man of feeling," and French italics. The uneasy tone of a society that wished to be light but was fearful of being vulgar, echoes in these letters. The incredible Sylvester and Clarinda correspondence furnishes the most perfect example of how ridiculous human beings are when they would be deliberately sublime. Mrs. McLehose, the Clarinda, was flurried, agitatedly chaste, and pluperfectly sentimental. Burns's courtship of her engaged two ambitions, never to be realized, and tragic for him to attempt—the desire to become the lover of a lady, and the ambition to become a "man of feeling." The ambitions militated against each other. Burns lacked the mawkishness that made Mrs. McLehose a quite complete "woman of feeling"; but he acquired enough of it to deform the simple, direct, and winning lover that he was in other circumstances.

All these distortions of his nature produced a psychological situation inhibitory to good writing. The letters were not a release from but an intensification of his social dilemma. In only a few of them, particularly those to rough Robert Ainslie, we have glimpses of the joyous and free writing that was elsewhere so effectually blotted by the reverent peasant and the anxious place-hunter.

They make painful reading on two scores—they describe a tragedy and are themselves tragic manifestations. They reflect the gloom that settled upon Burns as his burdens and illnesses grew. The second volume is appalling. A nervously conscientious excise-officer, a harassed father, a responsible brother, and an invalid, all tremble together in one man's body. The last tremor was death.

Nevertheless, a singularly attractive figure emerges from these letters. Burns was ambitious, but never dishonest. The ineffective sycophant exposes the sincere man. There is a singular purity in his respect for poetry. He might solicit influence for a job but he shrank from taking money for a poem. Out of his own small means he raised a monument to a neglected Scottish poet. His mind was reasonable and tolerant; his impatience with the "unco guid" was the reaction of a mind too humane to understand vindictive morality; his love of nature was inclusive and unaffected; he had the wisdom to see, far in advance of his time, the value of folk art, and sacrificed an enormous substance of leisure to the labor of collecting Scottish folk-song. As a lover of women, all the fine qualities of his nature were engaged. He was enthusiastic, tender, appreciative, and generous. He had nothing of the perverted and atavistic "conquest" psychology of the so-called great lover.

The recent publication by Miss Carswell of her fine life of Burns displaced all previous biographies and their attendant mythology. Now Mr. Ferguson, with his definitive edition of the letters, provides the corroborative evidence. If the myth survives, it will show a more stubborn vitality than even the most sturdy myths may be expected to show.

Mr. Ferguson's editing is careful. His introduction furnishes, along with a descriptive bibliography, a fascinating account of the Burns myth. In the arrangement of the letters he follows the customary chronological method; but it has occurred to me here, as it has in all my readings of books of letters, that grouping the letters to each correspondent in separate sections would perhaps be preferable. For each correspondent tends to draw out a special and unified set of reactions, and the correspondence reflects a continuous and autonomous experience. Printing each correspondent's letters together would show clearly the various aspects of the writer's mind and make more possible for the reader a synthesis of the facets of his personality.

Franklin Snyder's biography draws much of its substance from the letters. From the point of view of documentation it is the most careful of all Burns biographies in existence. It is, however, somewhat too detailed in its documentation. Mr. Snyder frequently interrupts the narrative to argue his evidence with lawyer-like determination, and is a little too fond of the game of matching poems to their presumable origins in events. That his book remains readable in spite of this is an indication of the crispness of his style. Mr. Snyder, though he is at pains to absolve Burns of the charge of drunkenness, follows tradition in lamenting his sexual lapses, and reaches the depth of pathos in his lachrymose speculations on the poetic heights Burns might have reached had the (possibly) pure Highland Mary survived to be his inspiration.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER

Shorter Notices

Monsieur Thiers and Nineteenth Century France. By John M. S. Allison. W. W. Norton and Company. $3.

Thiers played a large but not a great part in French history from the eighteen twenties to the eighteen seventies. He was one of France's subtlest politicians. He represented the triumph of the bourgeoisie, but since the triumph involved injustices to the working classes it warped and dirtied his mind, filling it with those rationalizations that are frequently called logic and realism because they do dirty work neatly. He was an ambitious upstart, a little man who ferreted his way into power and helped to undo two kings and an emperor while he was about it. His ideal was a representative monarchy—representative, of course, of the class he belonged to. Fate and the quarrels between Bourbon, Orleanist, and Bonapartist pretenders made him the first president of the republic, which has endured longer than he would have wished, but has lived up to the hope he expressed for a "conservative" republic. The author writes clearly and entertainingly, and reveals a thorough knowledge and understanding of the period. At the end, however, he allows himself to be overawed by Thiers's share in saving France from the final debacle of the Franco-Prussian War, for which his nationalist policies were fundamentally, if not immediately, responsible.

The Unknown War: The Eastern Front. By the Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill. Charles Scribner's Sons. $5.

On the Eastern front Russia engaged Austria, Turkey, and Germany. She paralyzed the Turkish effort, beat every Austrian army except those stiffened with German troops, but lost when she confronted German lines. And finally she collapsed. Had the Allies succeeded in helping Russia in time, the Balkan nations might have been rallied to her support, Constantinople captured, the Straits opened, Russian armies equipped with modern arms and munitions, the German armies kept divided on two fronts, and the war brought to an earlier conclusion. Thus here, as in his earlier book, "The World Crisis," Churchill is defending the Gallipoli adventure which he sponsored and which was designed to produce these ends. The adventure miscarried through half-measures and mismanagement. Churchill makes his points very well. His book is undeniably stirring, but it contains a repellent obtuseness to human values. He shows the stupidity, malevolence, and criminal cold-bloodedness of dip-

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lomats and generals, but he is quite cheerful about it. As a former military officer and as a present politician, he takes them and their work for granted. He reserves his venom for revolutionary Russia—the one nation that had the magnificent courage to stop fighting. Mr. Churchill, if he has the occasion to revise his books, should blot out his crocodile tears over the inhumanity of modern war and the collapse of civilization. All his recent statements show continued loyalty to the system that requires inhuman war and is ready to precipitate the ruin of civilization.

Drama

"Troilus and Cressida"

THE Players' Club production of "Troilus and Cressida" was none too well received, and it was obvious enough that most of the performers did not find themselves at home with Shakespeare's verse. In its enunciation, even Edith Barrett's otherwise delightful impersonation of Cressida left something to be desired; as Thersites Otis Skinner was intelligent without being wholly satisfactory; and, indeed, only Eugene Powers as Pandarus and Charles Coburn as Ajax were as good as one had hoped to find them. Yet I must confess that I am more than grateful to the Players for the opportunity of witnessing a play which has never been performed in New York before, and which, during the last hundred years at least, has been almost unknown on the stage. "Troilus and Cressida" may not be Shakespeare at his best; but neither are some of the other plays more often read or acted, and it has been neglected chiefly because its whole tone is so disturbing to all those who think that they know what manner of man its author was.

God forbid that I should attempt to say what is "Shakespearean" and what is not. The habitual temper of Shakespeare's mind is something as easy to perceive as it is impossible to define, and the adjectives commonly used to describe it—"noble," "serene," "harmonious," and the like—are fitting enough without being, nevertheless, by any means adequate to distinguish it from others which are serene and noble and harmonious in some quite different fashion. Yet it is obvious that for the most part the most tremendous of his tragedies and the lightest of his comedies are alike to this extent at least—there are no jangling discords and the author is presenting a world in which everything finds its place. In none of the major plays is human life really ugly, as in "Troilus and Cressida" it is, and the piece is "un-Shakespearean" because it is one continuous discord; because it has neither the nobility of tragedy nor the merriness of comedy; because, for once, its author seems determined to play each of even his familiar themes off key, and repeatedly to strike the very note most likely to offend our ears.

In the first place, the Trojan War, which forms the background of the action, is presented not as that opportunity for brave deeds which Shakespeare's other plays about war would lead us to expect, but merely as a stupid, pig-headed brawl over "a cuckold and a whore." In the second place, all the characters with the exception of Troilus and Hector are lacking in humanity, magnitude, or integrity. The warriors are stupidly ferocious; the heroine, for all her charm, is grossly wanton; the director of the action is a pander for pandering's sake; and the chorus is supplied by a man who chuckles at every baseness he can spy out and who addresses one of the heroes of his people thus: "I would thou didst itch from head to foot and I had the scratching of thee. I would make thee the loathsom'st scab in Greece." Everything goes wrong; every worthy beginning leads to some unhappy conclusion; and every catastrophe has, instead of the noble grandeur of the tragedies, something merely contemptible about it. Cressida is not Chaucer's pleasant little coquette with "a sliding heart," but a woman who can declare her love with an eloquence almost worthy of Juliet and then prove poetry a lie by offering herself, strumpet fashion, to the man nearest at hand. And then, lest we should possibly mistake the tendency of the play, Hector, the one real hero among the soldiers, is not killed in single combat by Achilles but stuck like a pig by three men as he lies unarmed.

Nothing is usually more characteristic of Shakespeare than his power of showing everything in its best light. The heroic aspect of every character or every action is the one which he almost invariably chooses to emphasize. Even his cowards and buffoons have greatness in them, and it is because of this fact that his plays are "serene"—that they seem in their various ways to say that the world is worth looking at no matter where one chooses to look. But for once he gives the lie to all this, and "Troilus and Cressida" is everywhere and in every sense anti-heroic—pervaded by a bitter, unhappy, and exasperated cynicism.

Most scholars have attempted to dismiss the paradox by calling our attention to the fact that Shakespeare's version of the story is not so at variance with tradition as those of us who know the Trojan War only through Homer are likely to suppose. They point out that he had precedent for treating its heroes with scant respect, that other once familiar treatments of the Cressida story are much less favorable to her than Chaucer's, and they have even gone so far as to suggest that the play was written to ridicule the translation of Homer made by Chapman, with whom Shakespeare had quarreled. They object to the suggestion that the play has any significance as an indication of its author's mood at the time it was written and insist that the materials upon which he worked simply proved themselves too "intractable" to be turned into a characteristically "Shakespearean" play.

Perhaps. Yet the fact remains that upon other occasions Shakespeare made pretty intractable matter serve his purpose, and that the hard-headed scholars do not explain why he should have felt compelled to write at all about characters and situations so unlike those which he commonly chose. There is, I think, still some excuse for romantic speculations, and I for one shall continue to wonder if the play is not evidence that its author was human enough to have had his moment of bitter doubt during which he was tempted to conclude that men and women were baser creatures than he had once represented them to be and than he was, indeed, to represent them many times again. I shall continue also to be grateful to the Players for giving a performance which may not have been perfect but which was conscientious, intelligent, rewarding. At the very least, it made the play more vivid for me than any reading of it had been able to do.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

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